

THE
HISTORY
OF
ARSAES,
PRINCE OF BETLIS.

Johnston (C)
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THE
HISTORY
OF
ARSACES,
PRINCE OF BETLIS.

Ficta, voluptatis causâ, sint proxima veris.

By the EDITOR of CHRY SAL.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOLUME I.

D U B L I N:

Printed for Messrs. W. SLEATER, M. HAY,
J. WILLIAMS, W. WILSON, J. HUSBAND,
and L. FLYN. MDCCCLXXV.



TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
THE LORD CAMBDEN.

My LORD,

I Must not make any Apology for claiming your Lordship's Patronage for the following Work. It is a Claim of Right. The Spirit of it is your own. I caught it by long and close Attention to your Lordship; and now that it is let loose into the World, it naturally flies back to its

A 4 Parent

DEDICATION.

Parent for Protection. If I have been so happy as to make the Body worthy of such a Spirit, that is all the Merit I pretend to.

I am, with Attachment and Respect,

My L O R D,

Your Lordship's most humble
and most obedient Servant,

CHARLES JOHNSTON.

—May 17, 1774.

P R E F A C E.

IN this enlightened age, when men judge intuitively of all things, it may not be improper to say a few words concerning the following work, if only to save critical sagacity from the misfortune of being led astray by the title.

In the History of the Prince of Betlis, there is not one soft scene of love, one sentiment of loose desire. Outrageous Virtue is never gratified with anecdotes of private Scandal; nor Licentiousness flattered with the sacred name of Liberty.

It must not, though, be concluded from hence, that Arfaces is a mere moralist, or held up as a pattern of perfection, a monster which Nature never formed. He is drawn as he was, with all his faults upon his head, subject to the power, but not the slave of Passion; and speaks with freedom the sentiments suggested by the occasion, whether gay or grave, of reprehension or applause.

To wipe off the false colourings of Prejudice, and shew Truth in her native purity, is the writer's aim. How he has succeeded, is not for him to say. There is, at least, some merit in the attempt, and upon that he humbly rests his fate.

Amid

Amid the variety of incidents, with which our hero's life was filled, the learned reader may probably not be displeased to find some curious points of history brought to light, which have too long lain in undeserved obscurity: Nor will he be offended at the writer's not having paid more minute attention to the manners of the times and countries, in which the various scenes of his work are laid. He has endeavoured to draw the universal manners of Nature, which suit all climes and ages. Greater particularity would have been only pedantry.

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THE
HISTORY
OF
ARSACES,
PRINCE OF BETLIS.

BOOK THE FIRST.

SECTION I.

AS Temugin was riding through his army, on the morning after his victory over Mohammed had added the mighty empire of Khouaresm to his boundless conquests, he observed, among the captives of the war, a youth just sinking under a double weight of chains, while the dignity of conscious virtue shone through his distress, and shewed a soul superior to misfortune.

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B

Temugin

Temugin was struck with the sight; and calling to the leader of the band, which guarded the captives, enquired who that youth was, and how he had merited such severity.

‘Lord of the Earth,’ answered the soldier, ‘this slave deserveth every cruelty which can be inflicted on him. He it was, who yester evening slew the valiant Togrul; and by his obstinate resistance, for some time delayed the victory, which crowned your arms.’

‘Say rather,’ returned the captive, with a look and accent of indignant contempt, ‘that I supported faithfully the cause in which I fought; and disdaining life, without its greatest blessing, liberty, strove, though alas! in vain, to lose both honourably together.’

The manner in which the captive spoke these words, heightened the favourable impression which his appearance had before made upon the heart of Temugin. ‘Take off his chains,’ said he, ‘and lead him to my tent: I will examine him more particularly, when I shall be at better leisure.’

The

The soldier instantly obeyed ; and the captive, prostrating himself before the emperor, expressed his gratitude for a favour, which darted a ray of hope through the gloom of his present situation.

Other cares prevented Temugin from thinking more of this adventure for the remainder of that day ; but when he retired in the evening to rest, the idea of the captive recurred to his mind, and took such strong possession of it, as to forbid every approach of sleep. Calling therefore one of the eunuchs, who watched at the entrance of his tent, he commanded him to order his attendance.

As soon as the captive entered, ‘ I have sent for thee,’ said the emperor, ‘ to learn the story of thy life. What is thy country, thy lineage, and thy name? And by what actions hast thou supported the sentiments, which I have heard thee utter with such energy? Arise! speak the words of truth, and expect a candid hearing.’

‘ Conqueror of the World,’ answered the captive, as he arose from the emperor’s feet, ‘ the incidents of a life of misfortune will afford but little entertain-

‘ment, to one who is raised above the reach of such himself; as they cannot interest a sympathetic regard.’

‘No state,’ interrupted the emperor, ‘is exempt from the common lot of humanity: nor is he capable of enjoying happiness himself, who is insensible to the sufferings of another.’

The captive replied not; but seating himself on the ground, at the foot of the emperor’s couch, began in these words.

SECTION II.

‘MY name is Selim. I come from the Valley of Amoim, in Arabia the Happy; where the wisdom and virtues of Abudah, my father, procured him, in a private station, a respect more sincere, than that which is usually paid to wealth and power. Much had he read, and thought still more. He had also travelled through many nations; and, by a comparison of their manners, dispelled the prejudices which too often spread a cloud over a contracted sphere.

‘But he was stopped in his pursuit of knowledge, by the nearer duties of domestic life. The cultivation of his mind had

‘ had refined, not extinguished the passions of nature. He viewed in a light of just contempt, the mistaken, imperfect happiness of celibacy ; and, in obedience to the first purpose of his Creation, took a wife into his bosom.

‘ Heaven seemed at first to smile upon his marriage-bed ; but the blossoms of his hope were soon blasted ; the hour which gave him a son, depriving him of a wife.

‘ Severely as he felt this loss, he sunk not under it. Reason succeeded the first emotions of nature ; and his piety trembled at the apprehension of offending heaven, by repining at its irresistible decrees.—Pardon, gracious lord, this mention of a father, to whom life is my least obligation. It is a necessary introduction to the story of my misfortunes. It is a tribute to his memory, which Nature will obtrude through all restraint.’

‘ Disgrace not reason,’ answered Te-mugin, ‘ by making an excuse for virtue. Duty to a father, as it is the foundation, so also is it the best assurance of loyalty to a sovereign. A good son cannot be a bad subject.—Proceed.’

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‘The love,’ resumed the captive, wiping away the pious tear which trickled down his cheek, ‘which Abudah had felt for his wife, was transferred to her wretched orphan, and doubled the force of paternal affection. As soon as he had paid the last debt of humanity to her beloved remains, he laid me in his bosom, and turned his steps home to his native land, where his tenderness well supplied the loss I had sustained.

‘His first care was to lay a foundation for that health, which is necessary for the enjoyment of life, and the performance of all its duties. He taught me to feel no wants but those of nature, whose inevitable imbecilities were not aggravated by injudicious fondness. Hunger sweetened the most simple fare; and exercise made me find refreshment in sleep, which was never allured by luxury, nor indulged to enervating excess; while my body, gradually inured to the vicissitudes of the seasons, required not the voluptuous incumbrance of cloathing to screen it from the severest inclemencies of weather. My food was vegetables. I drank of the brook: and I wore no cloaths but barely what the laws of decency demanded.

‘Yet,

‘ Yet, intent as he was on establishing my health, his care was not confined to that alone. As soon as the first dawn of reason began to enlighten my mind, he directed my thoughts to such objects as necessarily led to wisdom and virtue. He imprinted upon my soul a just sense of the obedience which I owed to the Author of my being, by explaining to me my dependence on him. He taught me to read the sacred proofs of his wisdom, his goodness, and his power, in the tremendous volume of his works. The stars of heaven shewed me the glory of their Maker. The sun by day, and the moon by night, bore witness to his power. My soul was humbled before the Lord of the Universe, and adored the goodness which incessantly supports the creatures of his hand.

“ As the life of man is designed for action, he would say, all knowledge which leadeth not to the practice of virtue, is but vanity.”—“ While my mind therefore was expanded by these sublime speculations, he explained to me the principles and reason of every duty of social and civil life; proving that obedience, which ariseth not from conviction of the justice and necessary obligation of a law,

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‘ has no more real merit, than the habitual servility of a brute animal.

‘ He then unfolded to me the complicated relations in which man stands to man, both as an individual, and as a member of a community; and from them deduced all the various duties of either state. “ The highest degree of perfection,” would he frequently say, “ to which the human nature can arise, consisteth in the imitation of the divine, which is possible only in benevolence; and constitutes the essence of all the moral, social, and civil virtues, however varied in their appearances, in the various circumstances and connections of life, from the peasant in the field, to the prince upon his throne.”

‘ The example of his actions enforced the precepts of his wisdom, and led me insensibly to practise the virtues he inculcated, as rising years afforded ability. I suffered hunger to feed the hungry; the feeble and aged found a support in the strength of my youth; and I rushed into danger to rescue the distressed.

‘ Nor were his instructions limited to the narrow sphere of our private station. ‘ As the powers of my mind became capable

ble of more extended exertion, he raised my view to higher scenes. He traced government to its origin in the general welfare and happiness of mankind, the source, from which ultimately and equally flow the different, but reciprocal duties of subjection and command; and reconciled their apparent oppositions, on the unerring principles of reason.

The avidity with which he saw my soul imbibe the instruction of his words, made him happy. "Power, my son," he would say, the tear of paternal tenderness and pride glissening in his eye, "was originally conferred as a reward of superior merit and virtue; and still the hand of heaven doth often most unexpectedly raise from the cottage to the throne, the man who is found worthy to govern. It is a duty, therefore, to qualify ourselves to fill properly whatever station is appointed for us."

In the pleasing illusion of these fond reflections, he unfolded to me the ordinances of peace, he taught me the arts, and inured me to the toils of war. "That general happiness," he said, "which was the cause, and should be the invariable aim of sovereign power, can be enjoyed

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“only in the shade of public tranquillity,
“the cultivation of which, therefore, as it
“is the first duty, so is it the true glory of
“a prince. But then, as the follies and
“vices of mankind make it impossible
“always to maintain that most desirable
“state, it is also indispensably necessary for
“him to be able to repel injustice, and as-
“sert his rights by war; of which, however,
“as these are the only just motives, so
“when they are accomplished, he should
“never let revenge, avarice, or a passion
“for false glory, inflamed by the deceitful
“smiles of success, urge him to pursue it
“farther. He should never forget that
“his foes are his fellow-creatures; that
“his very victories are purchased with the
“inevitable miseries of his own subjects.”

—‘But whither do I fondly run? Why
‘should I repeat the maxims of an humble
‘minded recluse to the Conqueror of the
‘world?’

‘Proceed,’ answered the emperor, ‘I
‘am attentive to thy words. The senti-
‘ments of thy father were suited to his
‘station. Had he been a sovereign he
‘would have thought otherwise.’

SEC-

SECTION III.

‘ MY mind had followed the words of my father, continued the captive, without difficulty or doubt, while he explained the duties of life upon the principles of reason, and truth; but when he descended from them to the practice of mankind, when he came to speak of the causes, and consequences of war, the scene was changed. I lost the awe of divine justice, which had led me hitherto; and wandered in the perplexing labyrinth of human life. I saw nothing but contradictions in the ways of man. All professed to seek happiness, but wilfully turned away from the paths which led directly to it. All professed virtue, but practised vice.

‘ False shame, (should I not rather call it pride!) would not permit me to disclose the difficulties in which I was entangled, to my father. I thought I could struggle through them, by the strength of my own mind, without betraying my weakness, by having recourse to his assistance. A presumption justly punished by all the miseries I have suffered since.

‘ Destitute

‘ Destitute thus of the guide, who had
‘ always led my steps in safety, I attempted
‘ in vain to grope my way through the
‘ darkness with which I was enveloped on
‘ every side. I attempted to trace conse-
‘ quences to their causes ; but the attempt
‘ still left me in greater uncertainty. I saw
‘ vice triumphant ! I saw virtue depressed !
‘ I was utterly at a loss to know whence
‘ this could proceed. If from good, why
‘ was the contrary prescribed ? If from
‘ evil, why was it permitted ? My mind
‘ was perplexed with many doubts. I at-
‘ tempted to measure the ways of heaven
‘ with the line of human reason, but it was
‘ too short ; and the more I thought of the
‘ subject, I was only perplexed the more ;
‘ insomuch, that I was at sometimes almost
‘ tempted to doubt, whether virtue and
‘ vice differed more than in name ! Whe-
‘ ther heaven really interfered in the go-
‘ vernment of the world, or left it merely
‘ to chance.

‘ As I sat one evening, on the bank of
‘ the rivulet which runs through the vale
‘ of Amoim, wrapt in these speculations,
‘ my senses were suddenly overwhelmed
‘ with sleep, and I saw, as in a vision, a
‘ Being, such as the celestial spirits who
‘ watch

‘ watch over the actions of mankind, are
‘ represented to be, standing beside me.

‘ Regarding me for some time, with a
‘ look of reprobation softened by pity,
“ Son of Abudah,” methought he said, in
‘ a voice which thrilled my soul, “ thy un-
“ happiness is beheld with compassion. I
“ come to put a stop to researches, which,
“ if pursued too far, would over-run reason.
“ Thy knowledge is only speculative.
“ Thou seest man, but as in a mirrour ;
“ and dost thou attempt to investigate all
“ the mysteries of his nature ! Vain pre-
“ sumption ! First look into real life ; nor
“ pretend to judge of the substance from
“ the shadow.”—Saying this he vanished
‘ from my sight ; and at that instant I
‘ awoke.

‘ It was some moments before I recovered
‘ from the extatrick awe with which this
‘ vision struck me. Starting up at length,
‘ and continuing the illusion of imagina-
‘ tion, I looked eagerly around for my kind
‘ instructor, and could hardly believe that
‘ I had seen him only in a dream.

‘ Nor did the discovery put an end to
‘ that illusion. I considered the words of
‘ my father, “ that heaven often opens its
“ will in the visions of sleep, when the
“ soul,

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“soul, freed from the clogs of sense, is
“more capable of entering into intercourse
“with the spiritual beings, which con-
“tinually surround us, though impercepti-
“ble to corporeal sight.” — And I looked
“upon the reverential awe, with which I
“had been over-powered, as an incontesti-
“ble proof, that the being, I had seen,
“was my better angel, sent to me with a
“command from heaven, to which it was
“my duty to pay implicit, and instant
“obedience.

“But this obedience was attended with
“difficulties of the weightiest nature.
“Against the will of my father, I was
“sensible that it would be impious to be-
“gin, in vain to expect success in any un-
“dertaking: And the anxiety he always
“shewed, if the ardour of the chace, or
“any other accident detained me out of
“his sight, only a few minutes longer than
“he expected, left me no room for hope,
“that he would consent to my plunging
“thus alone, into the difficulties and dan-
“gers of the world.

“In a cooler moment, this reflection
“would have been sufficient to deter me
“from any attempt: but my soul was now
“on fire; and inclination, co-operating with
“the

the power of imagination, proved too strong for reason. I thought I only preferred the superior duty expressly commanded by heaven, when I resolved to leave my father's house that very night, and launch into the boundless ocean of life, without giving him any notice of my design; an expedient, by which I flattered myself, that, by avoiding an express inhibition, I evaded the crime of direct disobedience, never rememb'ring the maxims invariably inculcated by him, "that candour is of the essence of every virtue;" and that "no good, in the end proposed, can justify any evil in the means made use of to attain it."

Vain as this evasion was, it silenced all my scruples; and I attended the call of my father to our evening's repast, with a serenity in my looks, which my heart was far from feeling.

But my soul soon shrunk back from such deceit, and I dared not to meet his eye, or return with equal warmth the kiss of love, with which he sealed his benediction, when he dismissed me, as he fondly hoped to rest. Inauspicious omen! Alas, too strictly fulfilled by the unhappy event. Oh! where was then my

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‘ my guardian angel? Why had not my
‘ soul some presage, that this kiss would
‘ be the last, with which I should ever be
‘ blessed by him! That thought would
‘ have opened my eyes; and brought me
‘ back to reason, and to virtue.’—

A flood of tears here choaked the utterance of Selim. He hung down his head, and, sobbing aloud, gave vent to the grief, with which the recital of this unhappy event had over-charged his heart; while Temugin, kindly sympathizing with him, interrupted not the pious offering of filial duty and affection.

SECTION IV.

NATURE at length being relieved by this indulgence, the captive thus continued:
‘ Having but few wants, I required little
‘ preparation for my intended expedition.
‘ As soon as my father retired into his own
‘ tent to rest, I girded on the sabre, and,
‘ mounting the horse, which he had pro-
‘ vided for me to learn the exercises of
‘ war, departed without having so much
‘ as considered whither I should direct my
‘ steps.

‘ But

‘ But my infatuation was too strong to permit my attending to any thing, beside compleating my escape. I therefore travelled forward during the whole night, without bestowing one thought on the folly and danger of such an undetermined state ; or stopping even for a moment, till the appearance of day reminded me of the duties of religion, when alighting from my horse, and sprinkling my face with an handful of sand, for I had no water to perform the ablution, I offered up the prayers of the morning.’—‘ Break not your narrative thus, by enumerating the performance of religious duties,’ interrupted Temugin ; ‘ We will suppose them always regularly performed.’ The captive bowed his head in obedience, and proceeded.

‘ The sacred awe, which always accompanies acts of devotion, stilled, for some moments, the tumult in my mind, and turned my thoughts in upon myself. I started at the first glimpse of my situation, which now began to open upon me. I dared not to look back ; and before me all was darkness and dismay.

‘ I paused to consider how I should proceed ; but before I could determine upon

‘ any

‘ any thing, the power of determining for
‘ myself was taken from me. A troop of
‘ Bedouins rushed from the covert of some
‘ trees, near to which I had stopped, and
‘ seized me as I lay prostrate on the earth.

‘ All the horrors of my situation in-
‘ stantly arose to my view. The more
‘ than brutal ignorance and barbarity of
‘ those lawless ravagers, of which I had
‘ heard too many melancholy instances,
‘ left me but little hope of favour at their
‘ hands. However, in the instinctive im-
‘ pulse of self-preservation, I threw myself
‘ at the feet of their leader, and, embracing
‘ his knees, conjured him to take compas-
‘ sion on my youth, and suffer me to return
‘ to an aged father, whose grey hairs the
‘ loss of his only son would otherwise
‘ bring with sorrow to the grave.

‘ But I prayed to the winds. Instead of
‘ being moved by my intreaties, the ruffian
‘ spurned me from him with his foot; and
‘ nodding to his followers, they instantly
‘ bound my arms, and putting me on my
‘ horse, led me away with them.

‘ What I now felt, at the thought of
‘ being thus torn, probably for ever, from
‘ the arms of my father, suggested to me
‘ the anguish of his soul, on missing me
‘ that

that morning. I saw, tho' too late, my crime in its proper colours; I owned the justice of heaven, in my own fate; and only grieved for the unhappiness with which I had overwhelmed him.

But I was not suffered to indulge such reflections. The rapidity, with which the ravagers hurried me along, kept my spirits in involuntary motion; and the novelty of their manners excited a curiosity, which in some degree diverted my attention from my own distress.

On a division of the captives of the expedition, I fell to the lot of the leader of the troop, by whom I was appointed to the lowest offices in his squalid œconomy. But I repined not. I remembered the words of the prophet, that "the days of man are numbered; and the events of his life written on the table, which standeth before the throne of God, from the beginning of the world." —I therefore humbled myself before heaven; and submitted, without murmuring, to its decrees.

Nor did this resignation, to the divine will, pass without reward. It was taken by my master for a willing acquiescence under his authority; and in a short time gained

‘ gained me his good opinion so far, that
‘ he set me over the other slaves of his
‘ household.

SECTION V.

‘ THE first use which I made of my
‘ new authority, was to lighten the yoke
‘ of bondage upon my fellow-captives.
‘ They received sufficient sustenance; their
‘ labours were suited to their strength and
‘ capacities; and their souls were not
‘ wounded by unmerited insult or re-
‘ proach.

‘ The consequence soon justified this
‘ conduct. The work of our master was
‘ performed to his satisfaction; and he
‘ slept in safety among slaves, who had
‘ no cause to wish him evil.

‘ But I was far from enjoying such happiness as they seemed to feel at this change
‘ of their condition. My soul, impressed
‘ with the deepest sense of piety and virtue,
‘ was shocked at such an absence of both,
‘ as degraded man below the level of the
‘ brutes which perish; and I trembled with
‘ fear, that the force of example might
‘ infect my heart, and sink me down to
‘ their degenerated state. Moral virtue
‘ and

and religion, my father had often and most earnestly inculcated to me, are so essentially connected, that the one cannot exist without the other. Of the truth of this maxim I had abundant proof in my present situation.

As the revelations of the divine will, vouchsafed as guides to reason in matters above the investigation of its own powers, were either utterly unknown, or at least so corrupted as to bear no resemblance to the sacred originals; so were the very rules of conduct, and mutual intercourse invariably imprinted by the hand of Nature on the human heart, for the most part effaced among them. Their knowledge of a Deity was uncertain, and debased with notions contradictory to those principles of his essence, which open themselves to reason in its first efforts. For beneficence or gratitude they had not even a name; and justice was no farther known or regarded by them, than as it served the convenience of preserving their respective property, and having that recourse to force among themselves, by which all their disagreements with others were decided.

• Though

‘ Though the horrors inseparable from
‘ slavery were aggravated an hundred fold
‘ under such masters, I never lost hope;
‘ nor slackened my assiduity in the execu-
‘ tion of the trust committed to me. “
“ will do my duty,” said I, whenever de-
‘ spair began to steal upon me, “ and de-
“ pend upon the justice of Heaven.” A
‘ resolution which, by keeping my thoughts
‘ employed, prevented them from brood-
‘ ing over my own unhappiness, and there-
‘ by enabled me to support its weight.

‘ The effects of my management soon
‘ became too evident to remain unnoticed;
‘ though my master, who held it beneath
‘ him to look so low, was the last to per-
‘ ceive the change. Awakened at length
‘ from his inattention, he gazed around
‘ him in stupid amazement; and, enquiring
‘ the cause of what he saw, opened his
‘ eyes and mouth into a broad stare, while
‘ I explained the reasons, and instance
‘ the advantages of my conduct; then
‘ awkwardly relaxing his features into the
‘ first smile of complacency they had ever
‘ felt, expressed something like approba-
‘ tion.

‘ Nor did he stop here. He represented
me in so favourable a light to the tribe
‘ that

that, looking upon me as one of themselves, they admitted me to accompany them in their excursions for prey; an honour never before conferred upon a captive.

SECTION VI.

‘ THOUGH such a course of life was equally contrary to the principles instilled into me by my father, and to the disposition of my own heart, the hope of one day regaining my liberty, and returning to him, which it seemed to open to me, outweighed every other consideration, and strengthened my hand on several occasions in such a manner as gained the approbation of my new companions.

‘ I had not been long in this state, when, in one of our expeditions, we happened to fall in with a caravan, so numerous and well provided for defence, that it appeared madness in us to attack them.

‘ But the prospect of rich plunder overbalanced every thought of danger; and we fell upon them with the fury of wild beasts enraged by hunger, rather than like human creatures.

‘ The

‘ The event was such as the rashness of
‘ the attempt deserved ; and we were re-
‘ pulsed with the loss of more than half our
‘ number.

‘ As I was not blinded by the same pa-
‘ sions with the rest of our troop, I had
‘ presence of mind to effect our retreat
‘ after they had all given up every hope of
‘ it ; the importance of which service raised
‘ me so high in their opinion, that their
‘ leader being among the slain, they con-
‘ fered his post upon me.

‘ This seeming honour only added anxiety to additional fatigue ; for as they
‘ pay implicit obedience to the orders of
‘ their leader, during their excursions, the
‘ care of conducting which is thrown
‘ entirely upon him, so every failure of
‘ success is imputed to him as a crime
‘ and exposes him to worse than brutal
‘ outrage.

‘ But the fascination of command made
‘ me blind to every objection ; and I
‘ entered upon my new office with all the
‘ eagerness of inexperience, encouraging
‘ myself with this reflection, that at any
‘ rate it was better to rule than to serve
‘ such savages : and that I should have
‘ in my power to direct their motions to
‘ the

the way most favourable to my escaping from them.

‘ As I saw that disappointment of the plunder sat heavier upon the survivors than the loss of their fellows, I considered whether it might not still be possible to compass, by stratagem, what we had failed of by force; and revolving in my mind various schemes, I at length hit upon one, which proved successful.

‘ For some days after our defeat, we hovered about the caravan, unable to bear the thought of quitting it, and giving up our hopes, though we could see no prospect of obtaining them.

‘ Having advanced thus a considerable way into the desert, a strong wind arose one morning, just after the caravan had begun to march. This incident instantly suggested to me, what I had hitherto wearied my thoughts in fruitless search of.

‘ Drawing our people out in a single line, at some interval from each other, I led them above the caravan, in the wind; and galloping rapidly along, we raised a cloud of sand, which the wind poured down upon them in a torrent horrible to imagination.

‘ As soon as I had reached the end of
‘ the caravan, in this manner, I turned off
‘ with the foremost of my followers, and
‘ taking a sufficient compass, to avoid in-
‘ commodating our own men, I was time
‘ enough back in the rear, to continue the
‘ line, as the last began to move. *also quod*

‘ Having repeated this, as long as I
‘ thought it possible for human nature to
‘ support it, we attacked them in the
‘ midst of their distress, when sinking
‘ under what they had suffered, and con-
‘ cluding, from the manner in which I had
‘ kept up the line, that our numbers must
‘ be many times greater than they were,
‘ they lost all spirit, and made but feeble
‘ resistance.

‘ It was impossible for me, in the first
‘ transports of victory, to prevent a carnage,
‘ to which the inequality of numbers un-
‘ happily gave the appearance of necessity;
‘ but as soon as their fury began to cool, I
‘ exerted myself to put a stop to that, and
‘ all the other outrages, too generally
‘ offered to captives. *raicollag bus*

‘ The booty gained on this occasion was
‘ so great, as for some time to satisfy desires
‘ which had never known bounds before;
‘ a cir-

a circumstance most favourable to my farther designs.

‘ When the captives were secured, the next thing was to take measures for our safe return home, which it was far from being easy to effect, as we were liable to be attacked by the other troops of Bedouins, who range these boundless desarts, and make no distinction of persons, where there is a prospect of prey.

‘ As this care fell entirely upon me, I resolved to execute it in such a manner, as to procure the liberty of as many as I could of the captives, whose lives I had saved. Accordingly when all things were in readiness for our march, I selected those whose youth made them best able to bear the yoke of slavery; and then dismissed the rest in peace, with provisions sufficient for their journey: an act of humanity unknown to the Bedouins, whose custom it was to slay all such captives as they thought useless to them.

‘ The dispositions I made for our march, and the vigilance with which it was conducted, secured our retreat through the midst of many dangers, several troops of much superior force having met us on

‘ our way ; but, deceived by our appearance, they did not dare to attack us.

SECTION VII.

‘ THOUGH the authority of the leaders of those tribes has relation only to the conduct of their excursions, and ceases at their return home, I flattered myself with a fond hope, that the great service I had done them would procure me an influence which might enable me to do them services still greater, by enlightening the brutal ignorance of their minds, and humanizing their manners.

‘ I was not insensible of the difficulties and dangers of attacking prejudices grown sacred by long use ; and that ignorance, always captious, seldom fails to revenge the imaginary affront of instruction ; but the thought of success was so pleasing, that I was not to be discouraged from the attempt by any apprehension.

‘ The first thing, necessary for accomplishing my design, was to select some person, on whom my instructions might be bestowed to best advantage, that he might assist me by communicating the information he should receive, and re-

‘ commanding

commending it from his own experience. Nor was I long at a loss whom to chuse. Khaled, the son of my late master, was the one in the whole tribe, with whom I had the greatest intimacy, whether from the circumstance of our having lived together, while I belonged to his father; or that my having once saved his life at the imminent hazard of my own, had attached him to me. With him therefore I resolved to begin, not more encouraged by our intimacy, than because I thought I perceived in him something more like that rational curiosity, which is the first incitement to knowledge, than in any other of the tribe.

' The only science of which the Bedouins had even the faintest conception, was that which regards the motions of the heavenly bodies. But though the clearness of their hemisphere, and the circumstance of their being obliged, by the heat of the sun, to perform the greatest part of their occupations in the night, gave them the most favourable opportunities for pursuing this study to advantage, they had made no farther progress in it, than barely what was necessary to direct

‘ their steps through the pathless desert,
‘ where they could have no land-marks to
‘ guide them in their way. On this science,
‘ therefore, as that most likely to interest
‘ their attention, I proposed to found my
‘ attempt.

‘ For this purpose, I took occasion to
‘ enter into conversation with Khaled, as
‘ if accidentally, on the various appearances
‘ of the heavens; and beginning with the
‘ first rudiments of the science, led him,
‘ as it were, step by step, up to the
‘ Creator of them, proving the necessity
‘ of his existence from the existence of his
‘ works; and his wisdom, his power, and
‘ his goodness, from the wonderful con-
‘ struction, and support of them.

‘ Having thus established in his mind
‘ the first principle of religion, in the
‘ belief of a Deity, I proceeded to deduce
‘ from thence the duties of piety, and
‘ moral virtue. But my endeavours, in
‘ this latter instance, were far from being
‘ attended with equal success.

‘ While my instructions had been con-
‘ fined to matters of mere speculation, he
‘ listened to me with willing attention; and
‘ not only assented to truths, which inter-
‘ fered not with the tenour of his life, but
‘ also

‘also exerted his utmost assiduity to communicate and inculcate them to others.

‘But when he saw, that an utter change in his whole conduct was to be the consequence, that passion was to be subjected to reason, and justice made the rule of action, no evidence, however clear and conclusive, was of force sufficient to combat habits, pleasing in practice, and, as it were, sanctified by long and general reception. On the contrary, from that moment, he withdrew his confidence from me; and I soon found that he counteracted, instead of assisting my endeavours.

‘Though I was well aware of the difficulties, which this defection of Khaled threw in the way of my designs, I was too sanguine in the pursuit to be deterred by it; and resolved to try, whether I could not effect by example, what I had failed of by the force of reason; taking care to commence with such things, as from their obvious advantage in a political, as well as rectitude in a moral light, I concluded must necessarily command instant assent.

SECTION VIII.

THE loss, sustained in the late expedition, had reduced the numbers of the tribe so low, that they were obliged to remain at home, for fear of being over-powered by some of the other tribes, whom they might meet in their excursions.

As they were sensible of this disadvantage, the severest to them, of which they had any sense, I judged that an attempt to remedy it must be embraced with the greatest readiness and joy.

Though the violation of the marriage bed was guarded against among them, by every preventive care, every terror of punishment, the female sex, before that bond, was abandoned to the most shameless prostitution.

Criminal as this custom was, the method taken to remedy what were looked upon to be the only bad effects of it, was still a greater crime. The wretched fruits of this licentious commerce were exposed to perish in the desert, without regard to the duty of paternal tenderness,

or

or the welfare of the community thus
robbed of its support.

‘ Against a practice, so contradictory to
nature, as well as to reason, I urged every
argument which either could suggest;
and, to give weight to my words, began
the reformation of it among my own
slaves, branding with a mark of infamy
every female persisting in promiscuous
prostitution; and obliging every male to
rear, and maintain, by extraordinary la-
bour, every infant assigned to him.

‘ Though, as I have before observed,
the public advantage was as obvious as
the private virtue of this regulation, a
general outcry was instantly raised against
it. The unmarried of both sexes ex-
claimed that they were robbed of the li-
berties and rights of nature; and the
whole tribe declared against the intoler-
able tyranny and crime of such an innova-
tion, which, as they alledged, would
compel people to rear children against
their wills, and contrary to their conve-
nience.

‘ It is impossible to express what I felt
at this utter disappointment of hopes,
upon which I had so strongly set my
heart. I now, too late, remembered

‘ what I had often heard from my father,
‘ that “ though it is the duty of every
“ person, and especially of those, whose
“ station may give influence to their exam-
“ ple, to live according to the dictates of
“ reason and virtue, yet a general reforma-
“ tion of manners is not to be too sanguine-
“ ly expected from the most eminent
“ example, or best concerted scheme, if
“ the circumstances of the times are not
“ assisting; but when these co-operate, the
“ most inconsiderable, and improbable
“ means are found sufficient to accomplish
“ the greatest ends.”—But my thoughts
‘ were soon diverted from these reflections,
‘ to matters of nearer concern to me.

‘ The charge of making innovations in
‘ their established customs was looked
‘ upon to be so atrocious a crime, that they
‘ resolved instantly to put a stop to it, by
‘ the most exemplary punishment, in order
‘ to deter any future presumption of the
‘ kind; for which purpose, they suddenly
‘ surrounded my tent, and having seized
‘ me before I could attempt either defence
‘ or escape, were proceeding to drag me
‘ out of the camp, in order to stone me to
‘ death, when I owed my safety to a prin-
‘ ciple,

' ciple, from which I had never expected
' to receive so great a benefit.

' Khaled, who had totally estranged
' himself from me, for some time, and was
' now become one of my loudest accusers,
' no sooner perceived their intention, than
' he rushed out of the croud, and claimed
' me for his slave, as having been the pro-
' perty of his father.

' I availed myself of the momentary
' check, which this claim gave to their
' fury, to speak in my own defence. I
' demanded to know my crime, and my
' accusers. I pleaded my services. I called
' upon their gratitude. I argued, up-
' braided, and besought; but all equally
' in vain. My voice was drowned in the
' cry of *innovation*, which was roared from
' every mouth; and without deigning to
' make any other reply, they directly gave
' me up to Khaled, to return to a state of
' slavery, from which I was deemed un-
' worthy to be freed, seizing upon my
' slaves, and every thing which belonged
' to me, as public property; or rather I
' should say, as proper objects of public
' rapine.

' As soon as the croud was dispersed, I
' turned to Khaled, and thinking he had
' devised

‘ devised this claim only to save my life,
‘ was advancing to embrace him, in testi-
‘ mony of my gratitude; but I was soon
‘ undeceived. Without shewing the least
‘ concern for my misfortune, or even tak-
‘ ing notice of ever having known me
‘ before, he ordered me to be thrown into
‘ a kind of dungeon, where they were
‘ wont to keep such slaves, as were found
‘ unserviceable to them, till a certain season
‘ of the year, when they disposed of them,
‘ and such other parts of their spoil, as they
‘ had no occasion for themselves, to mer-
‘ chants, whom they went to meet for that
‘ purpose, in exchange for matters of more
‘ immediate use.

‘ These occurrences were far from clear-
‘ ing up the doubts, which had been the
‘ cause of my leaving the bosom of my
‘ father. On entering the dungeon, my
‘ soul shrunk in upon itself in horror.
‘ “If this be real life,” said I, “better did
“ it appear in the mirror of speculation.
“ More favourably was the shadow to be
“ judged of, than the substance!”—

‘ It was some happiness to me, however,
‘ not to be left long to these reflections.
‘ That very evening, a party of the
‘ Bedouins set out to meet the merchants,
‘ and

and took me with them, among the other useless lumber, which they wanted to dispose of; when Khaled shewed his proficiency in knowledge, and virtue, by the value he set upon his instructor, giving me in exchange for a wallet, made of the skin of an ass.

SECTION IX.

THE merchant, whose property I thus became, thinking he saw something in my appearance not unworthy of his favour, as soon as the Arabs had concluded their markets, and departed, asked me in a humane manner, “for what fault I had been sold at so low a price?”

As my tongue knew no language but that of truth, I not only informed him of what he enquired, but also of the first motive and manner of my leaving my father, and the end proposed by my travels: to all which he listened with attention; and then told me, when I had concluded, that “these were matters, about which he had never concerned himself; that all his care was to buy and sell as well as he could; and that he was content to take the world as he found it, without enquiring

ing

“ ing farther into the actions of men, than
“ as they might affect his own interest.”

‘ Contracted as these sentiments then
‘ appeared to me, I was soon sensible of the
‘ advantage in my change of situation.
‘ My new master had much experience of
‘ the world, and its ways; and where a
‘ view to interest did not interfere, formed
‘ just conclusions from what he saw.

‘ The conversation of such a man, which
‘ I enjoyed in the most unreserved intimacy,
‘ sweetened the bitter cup of slavery,
‘ affording me pleasure, and instruction,
‘ at the same time. Without attempting
‘ to trace motives, or consequences, he
‘ related plain facts; and in them supplied
‘ a kind of artificial experience, unincum-
‘ bered with those disquisitions, which for
‘ the greater part only obscure what they
‘ pretend to illustrate, and are more apt to
‘ mislead, than guide reason to the right
‘ way.

‘ One evening, as I was sitting by myself
‘ in his tent, indulging the fond hope,
‘ which my master’s favour seemed to open
‘ to me, of returning to my father, he
‘ entered, and seating himself near me,
‘ “ Selim,” said he, “ I have observed your
‘ demeanor

“ demeanor ever since you have been with
“ me, and see that your wisdom much
“ exceeds your age. I have therefore
“ resolved to consult you on an affair,
“ which gives me much anxiety; and if
“ your sentiments concur with mine, shall
“ be glad of your assistance to carry them
“ into execution.

“ I have followed this painful profession
“ of a merchant, with various success,
“ for many years, without being ever able
“ to acquire a sufficiency for the support of
“ old age, in comfort and decency. Often,
“ indeed, have I thought myself within
“ sight of the end of my wishes, but some
“ unforeseen misfortune hath as often dis-
“ appointed my hopes. A reverse, which
“ I have too much reason to apprehend
“ at this time.

“ In the course of my present journey,
“ it has been my fortune to purchase a fe-
“ male slave, of such exquisite beauty,
“ and rare accomplishments, that I may
“ well expect to sell her to the Sultan of
“ Cairo, whither I am now going, for so
“ high a price, as shall make the rest of
“ my days happy, if her own perverseness
“ does not prevent me.

“ An

“ An invincible melancholy has preyed,
“ upon her heart, from the first day of
“ her coming into my possession. She
“ keeps a gloomy silence, which neither
“ threats, promises, nor intreaties can pre-
“ vail upon her to break. She turns away,
“ with disgust, from every attempt made
“ to entertain her ; and the sustenance she
“ takes is so little, that it shews she wishes
“ to shorten the number of her days.

“ Such a conduct alarms me with appre-
“ hensions, not only of missing my expected
“ profit, but also of losing the great price
“ I have given for her. A loss, which I
“ cannot bear. What I have to propose to
“ you, therefore, is, that you will strive to
“ insinuate yourself into her confidence ; I
“ am not insensible of the danger of such
“ a trust ; but I know your discretion, and
“ depend upon your virtue.

“ I suspect that her heart fosters some
“ secret grief ! If it could be discovered,
“ means might possibly be found to ad-
“ minister alleviation to it, at least. Will
“ you then try to make this discovery ?
“ The human heart finds comfort in the
“ communication of its woes ; and if you
“ can once engage her attention, I have no
“ doubt but she will open herself to you.”

“ There

There was something so uncommon in the nature of this proposal, that it raised a curiosity I had never felt before. Totally engaged in the pursuit of knowledge, under the eye of my father, I had never had any particular intercourse with the female sex; nor formed any notion of that power which nature has given them over the heart of man.

I had a desire, therefore, to see a woman, on whom were founded expectations, which appeared to me so extraordinary; and readily undertook a commission with the dangers of which I was unacquainted; if I should not rather say, that the mention of those dangers was my first motive for undertaking it, as it seemed to promise an opportunity of raising myself still higher in the opinion of my master, by my surmounting them.

SECTION X.

THE first time I saw her, she was sitting in her tent, with her eyes fixed upon the ground, and motionless, as if the action of every sense was suspended.

Struck with the sight, I gazed on her, and, while my eyes eagerly devoured her beauties,

‘ beauties, thought I was only studying
‘ how to address her in the manner most
‘ likely to answer the hopes of my master.

‘ I had stood thus for some moments,
‘ melting in sensations utterly new to me;
‘ when the fair slave, not having perceived
‘ my entrance, exclaimed with a sigh,
‘ which seemed to burst her heart, “ Un-
“ happy Sappho! To what new misery
“ am I reserved!”

‘ The sound of her voice awoke me
‘ from the extasy in which I had stood en-
‘ tranced. Throwing myself eagerly at
‘ her feet, “ Lovely Sappho!” said I, seiz-
‘ ing her hand, and pressing it to my heart,
“ unfold the cause, the nature of your un-
“ happiness, and depend upon every effort,
“ in the power of man to make, for your
“ relief.”

‘ Her surprize at so unexpected an ad-
‘ dress deprived her of utterance for some
‘ moments. Recovering at length, “ Insi-
“ dious man,” said she, tearing away her
‘ hand with indignation, “ to intrude upon
“ my solitude, in order to steal the secrets
“ of my soul! But your base arts shall not
“ avail! In my name, you know more
“ than I ever intended to discover! But
“ more than that shall you never know.”—

‘ Saying

Saying which she wrapped herself in her veil, and resumed her silence, which my most passionate entreaties could not prevail upon her to break.

' This repulse threw a damp upon my spirits, which I knew not how to account for. I was surprized at what I felt. I questioned my heart, whence it could proceed; and at length resolved it into my anxiety to serve my master, heightened perhaps, as I thought, by compassion for so fair a creature.

' This thought encouraged me to proceed, with double assiduity, in the execution of the task assigned me. I walked beside her camel, as she travelled, beguiling the way with tales of entertainment; and verses, which I hourly composed in praise of her beauty. I lulled her to sleep with songs of love, and consolation.

' Such a conduct could not fail to affect an heart naturally susceptible of the tenderest impressions. She relaxed her reserve. She received my services with complacency; and admitted me to a familiarity, which was soon improved into that tender kind of friendship which can subsist only between the different sexes.

' As

‘ As I was walking one evening, by the
‘ side of her camel, conversing with her on
‘ indifferent subjects, she dropped some
‘ expressions of surprize at my never hav-
‘ ing shewn any curiosity to know who she
‘ was, or by what means she had been
‘ brought into her present unhappy state.

‘ This was an opening which I had
‘ anxiously watched for. I replied, “ that
‘ far from being incurious about any thing
‘ which concerned her, my heart panted
‘ with the eagrest desire to know every in-
‘ cident of her life, in hopes of making
‘ some discovery which might suggest the
‘ means of removing her unhappiness;
‘ but that I had been kept silent by respect
‘ and fear of awakening that grief which
‘ had the pleasure to see in some measure
‘ beginning to subside.”

‘ Thanking me for my delicacy, she said
‘ with a reprehensive smile, that her griefs
‘ were too deeply imprinted on her heart
‘ ever to be forgotten; but though she
‘ could not flatter herself with the faintest
‘ hope of its being possible for me to afford
‘ her relief, she owed too much to my hu-
‘ manity to refuse gratifying me with the
‘ information I desired.

‘ Saying

“ Saying this, she paused for a few minutes to recover her spirits; then, wiping away a tear which accompanied the recollection of her misfortunes, she began in these words.

SECTION XI.

“ MY name you already know. I was born in the island of Mytilene, of a family which never knew disgrace, before I was unhappily added to it.

“ The fondness of my father viewing, in too favourable a light, the poor endowments bestowed upon me by nature, he spared no pains to improve them by every accomplishment of education, flattering himself with the hope, that they might raise me to a more exalted rank in life, by alluring the affection of some of our young nobility, whose own riches could enable them to consult inclination only in the matrimonial choice, as he had not himself a fortune to give with me equal to his wishes.

“ We often owe the disappointment of our designs to the very means upon which we build our most sanguine hopes of their success.

“ The

“ The power of pleasing, in which na-
“ ture was thought to have been most libe-
“ ral to me, was my voice. Fond of
“ music himself, my father omitted no-
“ thing which could conduce to perfect me
“ in an accomplishment so universally ad-
“ mired. I was instructed in the use of
“ every instrument. I had masters of
“ every country to modulate my voice,
“ and form my judgment, and fame said,
“ that their endeavours were not unsuc-
“ cessful.

“ Among these masters, the most cele-
“ brated was one, who had been educated
“ in the seraglio of the Khalif of Bagdat.
“ The care taken in that jealous court, to
“ prevent the ministers of pleasure from
“ abusing the access which their occupa-
“ tions necessarily give them to the female
“ sex, prevented also my father's having
“ any apprehension of danger from the fa-
“ miliarity of his access to me. I prac-
“ tised with him every hour, alone, in
“ every dress and every attitude he thought
“ proper; to try, as he pretended, which
“ suited best the powers of my voice.

“ Of all the pleasures of sense, that
“ which captivates the soul most strongly
“ is music. By its command over the
“ 512. passions,

“ passions, it commands the heart, while it silences reason by its union with sentiment.

“ Nor is this command exerted only over the hearer. The feelings of the performer advance with his execution; till he becomes insensibly the slave of his own art, as I soon unhappily experienced.

“ The praises, which I received for my proficiency, warmed my heart with gratitude to my teacher, to whose indefatigable assiduity I was sensible of my being indebted for them; and doubled my attention to his instructions.

“ In vocal expression, the attitude of the body naturally accompanies the sentiment. My teacher practised this to an extreme, which I at first thought ridiculous and disgusting. But that disgust soon wore off. I saw him, if I may use the expression, only with my ears; and found such pleasure in his voice, that every thing he did pleased me.

“ Such an prepossession in his favour could not long escape his observation. He perceived it too plainly, and took an advantage of it, equally base and absurd, to attempt improving my admir-

“ tion

"*tion of his voice into a passion for him
"self.*

“ With this intent, whenever we prac-
“ tised alone together, he chose none but
“ the most tender themes of love for his
“ lessons; and not content with my accom-
“ panying his voice, as before, taught me
“ also to imitate his looks and gestures, in
“ which he proceeded to every endearment
“ of the passion he expressed, till Nature
“ catching fire, realized the imitation on
“ my heart, and I felt the flames he only
“ acted.

“ My soul had, till now, been so totally engrossed by my passion for music, that I had never before felt the impulse of any other. Pleased therefore with sensations I did not understand, I took no pains to conceal them.

“ It is impossible to describe the rage of
“ my father at a discovery so destructive to
“ his hopes, so fatal to his fondness for
“ me. He directly turned off my teacher
“ in the most opprobrious manner; and
“ loading me with every reproach of in-
“ gratuity, degeneracy, and folly, inter-
“ dicted my ever seeing him with the
“ severest menaces.

"Nothing

“ Nothing shews the natural right of
“ the human soul to liberty so strongly as
“ the reluctance with which it bears every
“ semblance of restraint.

“ Though my heart had been warmed
“ by the caresses of my teacher, I was so
“ far from having confirmed a passion for
“ him, that I knew not even what that
“ warmth meant; and would have rejected
“ any direct offer of love from him with
“ indignation. But my pride was now
“ piqued on the opposite side, by this
“ treatment from my father; and I thought
“ it no more than a just assertion of my
“ liberty, to do that which he had unjustly
“ attempted to prevent my doing.

“ My teacher, who had found means to
“ have intelligence of every thing which
“ passed upon the occasion, soon availed
“ himself of this spirit of liberty, (should I
“ not rather call it contradiction?) which
“ my father had raised in me. He re-
“ quested a private interview, which in
“ the present state of my mind I made no
“ difficulty of granting; when pressing
“ his suit with all the ardor of desire, and
“ treating the charge of its absurdity with
“ contempt, as a calumny devised only to
“ deceive my inexperience, he worked up

“ my passions, particularly my resentment,
“ to such an height, that he obtained from
“ me a promise of marriage under the
“ sanction of the most solemn vows.

SECTION XII.

“ A moment's reflection shewed me all
“ the misery into which I had plunged
“ myself; but I was not long permitted
“ merely to reflect upon it.

“ My promised husband could not con-
“ ceal his triumph over the contempt and
“ contumely with which he had been treated
“ by my father. The consequence of this
“ indiscretion was equally severe upon us
“ both. He was thrown into the common
“ prison, where he suffered all the indig-
“ nities and wretchedness of poverty and
“ guilt among the vilest malefactors, for
“ having seduced a pupil whom he had
“ been entrusted to teach for hire; while
“ my father, in virtue of his paternal au-
“ thority, confined me to my chamber, in
“ which I was guarded with the most
“ rigid vigilance, and denied every thing
“ like pleasure, or even comfort; in order
“ to punish me for my past disobedience,
“ and bend me to his purpose of breaking
“ the

the engagement into which I had entered.

“ But this severity disappointed itself, and only hardened my resolution into obstinacy. Though I saw all the wretchedness I had to expect, with such a husband, in a life of vagrant poverty, dependence and disgrace, I dreaded still more the scoffs of my acquaintance, and the bad treatment of my family, of which I had already tasted so bitterly, should I remain among them.

“ I therefore determined to feign a passion which I did not feel, as the only excuse for my folly; and take my fate, however hard, among strangers, away from the slights and reproaches of my friends.

“ I say, a passion which I did not feel. For, upon examining my heart, I found in it none of that enthusiasm, that madness of love, which is described as delighting in dangers, and sweetening distress. I found it had been the music I had loved, not the man; and that the connection between them had even lessened that love. I had dreamed of happiness, but I awoke to misery.

“ My obstinacy at length so effectually
“ weaned me from my father’s love, that
“ he cast me off from his care, and aban-
“ doned me to my fate; when the first
“ use I made of my liberty was to fly to
“ my teacher and perform my promise of
“ marriage amid all the horrors of his
“ prison.

“ Formed by nature for love, the hu-
“ man heart sympathizes instinctively in
“ the misfortunes too often occasioned by
“ it. This act of mine had such an ap-
“ pearance of the infatuation of that pa-
“ sion, that it moved the pity of all who
“ were not immediately interested in the
“ honour of my family; and my husband
“ found protectors who soon restored him
“ to liberty.

“ Our situation, however, seemed to be
“ but little amended. We were at liberty
“ to go whither we listed; but we wanted
“ the means; and to remaining where we
“ were, could we even have subsisted there,
“ I would have preferred perishing of fa-
“ mine in any other place.

“ At length the cold hand of charity
“ scantly enabled us to travel to the me-
“ tropolis; where curiosity to hear a voice,
“ which had had power to invert the laws

“ of

“ of nature, for some little time drew such
“ crowds to my husband’s performances,
“ that we were relieved from the imme-
“ diate pressure of poverty.

“ But most dearly did I purchase this
“ relief. The curiosity of the public was
“ not confined to my husband. They must
“ also see the subject of his triumph ; the
“ fool, who had sacrificed sense to sound.
“ Every one who patronized assumed a
“ right to visit him. I was shewn from
“ morning till night, to a succession of
“ strangers, who broke in at all hours,
“ without respect or ceremony ; and gazed
“ at me with as much indelicacy and ins-
“ lence, as if I had been a monster exhi-
“ bited to fight for hire.

“ Nor did I suffer from their gazing
“ only. They insulted me incessantly with
“ such ribbald questions, and such base
“ proposals, as were an outrage upon the
“ female character : and when I ventured
“ to express disapprobation of their beha-
“ viour, though in the most humble terms,
“ they treated my tears with ridicule ; and
“ threatened to punish me for such pre-
“ sumptuous affectation, as they gibingly
“ called it, by withdrawing their favour
“ from my husband.

“ Much as I was humbled in my own
“ eyes, my spirit was not yet sufficiently
“ subdued to submit to such usage. - I
“ complained to my husband in bitterness
“ of soul; and declared my resolution to
“ shut myself up from the sight of the
“ world, rather than suffer a repetition of
“ it.

“ But I was far from receiving the ap-
“ probation of my conduct, much less the
“ protection I expected from him. He
“ answered me coldly, that my sensibilities
“ were too lively, and took unnecessary
“ offence; that what I complained of was
“ merely a thing of course; that we must
“ humour the caprices of those by whose
“ favour we lived; and that other women,
“ instead of being offended by the propo-
“ sals made to me, would have turned
“ them to good advantage, as they were
“ indeed one of the best resources in our
“ way of life.

“ It is impossible to express what I felt
“ on his saying this. I thought I had
“ before seen all the horrors of my situa-
“ tion; but these words opened new, of
“ which I had not had the remotest con-
“ ception; and betrayed the infamous
“ origin of all his base designs upon me.

“ As

“ As soon as the fullness of my heart
“ permitted me to speak, I answered him
“ with a look of the most poignant dis-
“ dain, “ that what he meant by *his* way of
“ life, I knew not, nor desired to know;
“ but that *mine*, though a life of folly and
“ misfortune, had ever been, and ever
“ should be, a life of virtue and honour,
“ nor would I add to the disgrace I had
“ already brought upon my family, by
“ departing from those principles, to save
“ myself from perishing of famine, as I
“ justly deserved.”—Saying which I re-
“ tired to my chamber; nor could all his
“ expostulations, menaces, or entreaties,
“ ever prevail upon me to alter my resolu-
“ tion.

“ The curiosity which our strange ad-
“ venture had raised, was no sooner grati-
“ fied, than my husband’s voice lost its
“ attraction; and we sunk back into our
“ former distress; for such a slave was he
“ to the appetites which he could indulge,
“ that he always lavished his acquisitions
“ in the instant; nor even let the wants of
“ yesterday warn him to make provision
“ for the morrow.

“ I was now obliged to fly my native
“ country, and enter upon a life of va-

“ grancy, literally for a morsel of bread;
“ without the illusion of hope, or gratifica-
“ tion of passion to silence the reproaches
“ of reason, and divert my thoughts from
“ dwelling upon the wretchedness into
“ which I had plunged myself.

“ The scene was the same wherever we
“ went. Curiosity, for he took care to
“ make my folly known, at first procured
“ us momentary relief, which was as
“ quickly dissipated; so that we were al-
“ ways in the extremes of poverty or pro-
“ fusion.

“ My only shadow of satisfaction was,
“ that my husband desisted from his base
“ solicitations; in expectation, as I soon
“ saw, that the conversation of such com-
“ pany, of either sex, as I was obliged to
“ consort with, would in time undermine
“ my principles, and reconcile me to enter
“ willingly into all their ways.

“ But his necessities soon became too ur-
“ gent, to permit his waiting for an effect,
“ of which he thought himself so secure;
“ and he compleated the villainy of his
“ first seduction, by selling me for a slave
“ to this merchant.

“ My resentment, as the base wretch
“ never dared to see me more, fell justly
“ upon

“ upon myself; and I resolved to shorten
 “ the days of my misery gradually, by
 “ abstinence, as the least painful way. But
 “ your kind consolations have shaken that
 “ resolution. In the seraglio of the sultan,
 “ for which you say I am destined, I shall
 “ have tranquillity at least, and that is the
 “ nearest approach to happiness which I
 “ have any right to hope for in this world.”

SECTION XIII.

‘ WHEN the fair slave had finished, I
 ‘ left her to recover her spirits, which ap-
 ‘ peared to be exhausted by the length and
 ‘ nature of her story; and upon consider-
 ‘ ing the circumstances of it, I thought I
 ‘ had found the object of my search, in the
 ‘ source of her misfortunes. “ All the
 “ evil in this world, all the errors in the
 “ conduct of man,” said I, “ certainly pro-
 “ ceed from wrong education. How could
 “ she escape the snare, into which she was
 “ led by those, whom Nature and Reason
 “ taught her to look upon as her safest
 “ guides? With what colour of justice
 “ could her father blame her, for a con-
 “ duct which was the necessary consequence
 “ of his own indiscretion? From wrong

“ education certainly proceed all the evils
“ which deform human life.”

“ I was pleased with this discovery ; and
“ plumed myself not a little upon the saga-
“ city which had made it. But my exulta-
“ tion lasted not long.

“ But if her father’s indiscretion,” I con-
“ tinued on farther reflection, “ was the
“ cause of her first error, was his exertion
“ of the sacred right of paternal authority,
“ a just cause for persisting in that error?
“ For aggravating it by direct disobedience
“ to his just command? Did this indiscre-
“ tion of the father, in giving his daughter
“ so wrong an education—Did the villainy
“ of the husband in basely selling into sla-
“ very the victim of his base seduction,
“ proceed from errors in their education
“ also?—There was more in this matter
“ than I was aware of. I should be ac-
“ quainted with every particular, to be
“ able to form a just judgment of the
“ whole.

“ And even, if I knew all these circum-
“ stances, is it safe to extend a judgment
“ formed upon one event, or one series of
“ events, to the infinitely varied tenor of
“ human life? I must suspend my opinion,
“ till I shall have seen farther into the in-

“ terior

“terior principles on which it is conducted.
“A wrong education is certainly the source
“of many evils; but it is not equally cer-
“tain, that it is the source of all.”

‘Though many circumstances in the
‘story of the fair slave had necessarily
‘lowered her in my opinion, they seemed
‘to have a contrary effect upon my heart.
‘To the compassion which I had before
‘felt for her sufferings, was now added a
‘desire to correct the errors from which
‘they sprung; a task which I flattered
‘myself would be as easy as pleasing,
‘from the candor with which she had con-
‘fessed them.

‘Happy in this thought, I entered ab-
‘ruptly, at our next meeting, into those
‘particulars, in which I thought she had
‘been most to blame; and examining
‘them closely, proved by arguments more
‘conclusive than complaisant, that all her
‘misfortunes had proceeded from herself.

‘Though her looks sufficiently shewed
‘that this subject was far from being
‘pleasing to her, she heard me to the end,
‘without interruption; when instead of
‘making any reply to the purpose of what
‘I had been saying, she hummed a tune
‘for a few minutes, and then asked me,
‘if

“if I had heard whether the sultan was
“fond of music.

“So contemptuous a repulse embarrassed
“me so much, that it was some time before
“I could make her any answer. At length,
“bowing coldly, I told her, that the
“sultan’s taste was one of these secrets of
“the seraglio, with which the voice of
“fame presumed not to meddle: adding
“with a significant smile, that I had pleased
“myself with the hopes of turning her at-
“tention to objects more worthy of it.

“She saw my embarrassment, and seemed
“unwilling to encrease it. “Your inten-
“tion,” she answered, “did not escape
“my notice; but I cannot accommodate
“myself to it. You have drawn so favour-
“able a picture of the life led in the
“seraglio, that I have fixed my heart
“upon entering into it. If the sultan is
“fond of music, I have no fear but I shall
“gain his favour. Such a conquest only
“can compensate for my past misfortunes;
“and I would attempt it to-morrow, if I
“were at liberty, and able to follow my
“own inclinations. Any advice therefore,
“which you can give me to accomplish
“this, I shall receive with gratitude. To

“any

“any other purpose it will be in vain for
“you to advise me.”

‘ So peremptory a declaration effectually silenced me. I bowed my head respectfully, and left her, without saying another word, resolved never to think of her more.

‘ I was soon sensible, that the only way to fulfil this resolution was to avoid her company. I therefore told the merchant what she had said to me, who thanked me in the warmest terms for the service I had done him, in reconciling her to his views; and acquiesced in my opinion, that it was not necessary for me to continue my visits to her.

‘ Such a sacrifice to reason was not unattended with pain; nor am I certain that I could have persisted in my resolution, but that our arrival at Cairo produced such an unexpected change in my situation, that if the remembrance of the fair slave would at times force itself upon me, it soon gave place to other objects.’

‘ How unjust is the pride of speculative wisdom,’ interrupted the emperor. You were offended at her, because she would not listen to advice she could not follow. What could she think of, but improving

‘ a fate,

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‘ a fate, which she could see no possibility
‘ of avoiding? In reality, it was you who
‘ gave cause of offence. Impracticable
‘ advice is only insult to the unfortunate.—

‘ But stop! The appearance of the
‘ morning calls my attention to other
‘ matters. I have not leisure to listen to
‘ thee longer now. At some other time,
‘ my curiosity may possibly require the
‘ continuation of thy story. In the mean
‘ while remain at thy liberty among my
‘ attendants; and set thine heart at ease.
‘ Thou art not now among the Bedouins.’

End of the FIRST Book.

THE
HISTORY
OF
ARSACES,
PRINCE OF BETLIS.

BOOK THE SECOND.

SECTION I.

SOME days passed before Temugin could attend to the continuation of the captive's story; but his curiosity, though restrained, was far from being satisfied. The first evening he could spare from his weightier cares, he commanded his attendance; when he resumed his narrative, in these words.

‘ From the general tenour of the merchant's conversation, I had been led to
‘ think

‘ think his principles strictly just, and
‘ generous to the best of his conception;
‘ but I soon found that the difference be-
‘ tween speculation and practice is equally
‘ great, in every station of life. On the
‘ third day, after our arrival at Cairo, he
‘ fulfilled his professions of friendship, and
‘ gratitude for the service I had done him,
‘ by selling me as a slave to the grand vizier.

‘ I must not, however, in justice to him,
‘ omit a particular circumstance, which
‘ happened on this occasion. When he
‘ was delivering me to the vizier, he told
‘ me, as an excuse of his disappointing the
‘ hopes of liberty, which he had always
‘ given me, that it had not been his inten-
‘ tion to sell me, but the vizier, who had
‘ been pleased with something in my ap-
‘ pearance, offered him so high a price,
‘ that he could not possibly refrain from
‘ accepting it; “for you know, he con-
“ cluded, that it is a rule with us, who
“ live by buying and selling, never to re-
“ fuse a good offer.”

‘ This excuse took effect, though not in
‘ the manner it was intended. It gave me
‘ such a contempt for the man, who made
‘ it, that I left him with pleasure, though
‘ to continue in slavery.

‘ The

‘ The accounts which I had received from my father of the perfection, to which every power of human art and genius had been carried in Egypt, had raised my curiosity so high to see the country, that I almost forgot the wretched state in which I went thither. But how was my expectation disappointed ! The ruins of ancient magnificence only made present misery the more remarkable. The rulers prided themselves in brutal violence, in the destruction of works they could not imitate ; and the contempt of sciences above their comprehension. The people a mixture of that dross of all nations, who destitute of principle or sentiment, ramble from their native homes, and submit to all the insults and oppression of foreign tyranny for the sordid sake of scraping up wealth, which they dare not enjoy, had neither leisure, genius, nor spirit to cultivate either art or science.

‘ My soul sickened in the contemplation of such degeneracy. I would have preferred returning to the Bedouins in the desert, to remaining in a country, once the pride of nature, had I been master of myself. There was a possibility at least that those savages might be re-
claimed

‘ claimed in time ; but here, every thing
‘ was evidently growing worse ; nor could
‘ imagination set bounds to their fall,
‘ when the height, from which they had
‘ already fallen, was considered.

‘ But I was soon delivered from the pain
‘ of such contemplations. In less than a
‘ moon, after I was sold to the vizier, he
‘ was deposed, and strangled ; and all his
‘ property confiscated to the use of the
‘ sultan.

‘ In the dissipation, usual on such occa-
‘ sions, it fell to my lot, to be given to an
‘ officer, who was sent the very next morn-
‘ ing to execute a like sentence on Alman-
‘ zor, the brother of the late vizier, who
‘ commanded the Egyptian army on the
‘ confines of Biledulgerid, and took me in
‘ his train.

‘ As it was necessary to the success of his
‘ commission, that he should execute it,
‘ before the fate of the late vizier should
‘ come to the knowledge of his brother,
‘ to put him on his guard, as his great
‘ abilities and virtues had endeared him so
‘ highly to his troops, that they would, to
‘ a man, have defended his life ; with their
‘ own, we traversed the inhospitable desert
‘ of Barca, with the utmost expedition.

20th inst.

S E C.

SECTION II.

ON the fourth morning of our journey, as we sat upon the bank of a river, to refresh nature after so severe a fatigue, we were surprized at the sight of a troop, which came pouring down upon us, from every side.

The state of universal war, in which we knew the rovers of those desarts live with all mankind, left us no room to doubt of their intentions; at the same time, that their numbers shewed it was in vain to attempt resistance.

In such a situation, there was not a moment to deliberate. I sprung instantly upon my horse, whom I had learned from the Bedouins never to quit, and calling to all those, who preferred death to slavery, to follow me, I plunged into the river: But not above three or four followed my example; the rest, stupified by the affright, and fond of life, even in its most abject state, not daring to make so desperate an effort to preserve their liberty.

The rapidity of the stream hurried me away, with a violence which soon diverted

‘ verted my attention from every thing
‘ but the immediate danger of my life
‘ Thrice was I swallowed in the whirl-
‘ pools, which foamed among the rocks
‘ that broke the current of the river; but
‘ the strength and spirit of my horse,
‘ whom I clung in the instinctive impulse
‘ of self-preservation, after I had lost sense
‘ of every thing else, bore me through to
‘ the opposite shore.

‘ When I had recovered myself a little
‘ and returned thanks to heaven, for so
‘ signal a mercy; I looked wishfully around
‘ for my companions, but all in vain.
‘ However, as I had been borne by the tor-
‘ rent, out of the view of the enemy, I
‘ lingered awhile on the bank, to see if they
‘ might not happily have gained some
‘ other part; till at length losing every
‘ shadow of such hope, and growing ap-
‘ prehensive, that the rovers might find
‘ some safer place to pass the river, and
‘ pursue me, I turned about, and plunged
‘ into the pathless wilderness, ignorant
‘ whither to direct my steps.

‘ I proceeded thus, guided only by de-
‘ spair, till the approach of night, when
‘ the roaring of the various beasts issuing
‘ from their dens in search of prey, warned

‘ me

me to provide for the safety of the present moment, however dreadful the farther prospect, which lay before me. Accordingly fastening my horse to the root of a lofty tree, I climbed its summit, and imploring the divine protection, disposed myself to rest among the branches, in the best manner such a situation would admit.

‘ Nature was so exhausted by the accumulated fatigue, which I had undergone, both in mind and body, that I soon sunk into a profound sleep, in which I lost, for some happy hours, the remembrance of my misfortunes.

‘ At the approach of morning, when my senses were refreshed, and the faculties of my mind had recovered their vigour, I saw a vision, and in the power of imagination beheld the same celestial being, which had appeared to me, in my dream, the morning before I left the house of my father.

“ Selim,” methought he said, regarding me with a look of reprobation, “ from thine own presumptuous folly have arisen thy misfortunes. Let experience teach thee wisdom. Thou art now launched forth into the great ocean of the world.

“ Pursue

“Pursue thy course steadily through it
“under the direction of reason; nor while
“thou shalt merit its protection by virtue,
“fear being deserted by that power,
“which hath hitherto so eminently pro-
“tected thee. Remember, that though
“the days of man are numbered, and the
“hour of his death appointed from the
“beginning, the manner of that death
“depends upon himself, whether in in-
“famy or glory.”—

‘My vision was broken off, as he spoke
‘these words, by a most tremendous noise,
‘at which I instantly awoke; when the first
‘object I saw was an huge lion, which
‘had just seized upon my horse, and was
‘tearing him piece-meal.

‘The distress, with which I was affected
‘at this sight, is not to be expressed. The
‘sense of my dreadful situation, deprived
‘thus of my best assistance to traverse
‘those boundless wilds, was heightened by
‘gratitude to the noble creature, which
‘had so lately saved my life. I wept in
‘the weakness of my soul; and was
‘tempted by despair to precipitate myself
‘upon him, and either revenge, or share
‘his fate.

• But

• But a recollection of the words, which I had just heard in my vision, prevented my being guilty of such rashness. I considered that the dangers, which made my present prospect so terrifying, were yet less immediately terrible, than those which I had so lately escaped; and gathering hope from thence, I implored a continuance of the divine protection, and resigned myself with humility to the dispensations of heaven.

‘ This restored my mind to some serenity, and enabled me to consider, which way I should direct my course, as soon as the departure of the lion should permit me to descend from my place of safety; but so many obstacles presented themselves on every side, that reason could find no hope, whereon to form a choice.

‘ In this perplexity, it occurred to me at length to pursue the journey, in which I had been engaged; and strive to join, if possible, the army of Almanzor, though with a different intention from that with which I had been sent.

‘ No resolution, which was not absolutely impossible, could have been attended with greater difficulties. I had still an immense tract of this inhospitable wilder-
ness

ness to traverse. I knew not my way through it. I knew not even where the army of Almanzor lay. My only direction was, that I had heard our journey pointed to the west; and I imagined that the traces of so great an army, would be easily discovered, when once I should come into an inhabited country.

On the support of this slender hope, I set out accordingly, as soon as I descended from the tree, and travelled through the wilderness for the space of forty days, without meeting the footstep of any human creature, or having the satisfaction of any certainty, that I was not involving myself deeper in those inexplicable wilds; chusing my steps by day with the most anxious dread of the serpents, and other venomous reptiles, which hissed continually on every side; and flying at the approach of night to some tree for safety from the various beasts, whose roarings tore the air around me; while I fed on wild fruits, with the birds of the air, except when failing of them I was forced to feed upon the birds themselves, which I slew with my bow and arrows.

At

‘ At length even these resources failed me. I was several days without meeting any fruits; and consequently met very few birds, which seldom resort any places, but those in which they find their food.

‘ My spirits losing by degrees the support of hope, sunk with my strength. I thought it in vain to struggle longer with a fate, which seemed inevitable; and therefore layed me down to wait for death, in whatever shape he should please to attack me.

SECTION III.

‘ THE place I chose for this purpose was of itself sufficient to throw a gloom over the happiest mind. Stupendous ruins, inhabited by every animal, the most fierce and poisonous of the savage race, and surrounded with woods, almost impervious to them, hung over a rapid stream, broken into numberless cataracts, by the fragments of the buildings, which had fallen into it.

‘ Imagination wearied itself, in the present contemplation, in reflection on the former grandeur of this scene of desolation,

lation, till I sunk into a kind of slumber. But the impression made upon my mind by such objects, had heightened the sense of my own misery, too much, to permit my sleeping long. I soon awoke, and raising my eyes, what was my astonishment to see a being, whose appearance was such as must strike the most insensible heart with awe. His stature arose above the common size of man. His beard fell bright as burnished silver down his breast. A loose vesture shewed his large limbs; and a staff supported him as he stooped over me.

‘ My heart almost died within me at the sight. I was sensible that I was awake; and wanted that intrepidity with which sleep prepares us to behold its own creatures. I thought I beheld a being of another world; and though despair had steeled me against every common attack of fear, a sacred horror seized my whole soul; and for a time suspended all its faculties.

‘ Recovering at length the power of utterance, “ Defend me, heaven!” I exclaimed, “ my life is in thine hand.” — Then prostrating myself at his feet, “ O gracious being, I continued, of what

“ Seever

“ soever state, for my soul feels thou art
“ above mortality, receive into thy pro-
“ tection the most forlorn of mankind ;
“ and direct me to some end of the misery
“ under which I am now sinking.”

‘ He saw the distress of my soul, and
reaching his hand with a look of ineffable
benevolence, “ Arise, my son !” said he,
“ arise ; and fear not. You behold a man
“ like yourself ! A man, once as unhappy
“ as you can possibly be, till resignation,
“ and the lenient hand of time, in some
“ degree healed the wounds of misfortune ;
“ and restored peace to my heart. Nature,
“ at the long disused sight of man, first led
“ me toward you ; and sympathy now bids
“ me offer you all the consolation and
“ assistance in my power.”

‘ Encouraged by these words, and more
by the manner in which the venerable
speaker of them addressed me, I arose ;
and bowing my head, in sign of grateful
obedience, for I was not yet sufficiently
assured to speak, I followed him toward
his habitation, which he shewed me at
some distance from the other ruins, by
the side of the river.

‘ It was a circular building of vast ex-
tent, the walls of which had been so high,

‘ that, though a great part of them was
‘ fallen in several places, that which re-
‘ mained standing was still sufficient to
‘ exclude every creature without wings:
‘ nor could I perceive a place of entrance,
‘ for any other, as he led me all around it.

‘ I was just going to express my surprize
‘ at this, when my conductor stooped; and
‘ taking a ladder, which lay concealed at a
‘ little distance, he applied it to a narrow
‘ aperture in the wall, at a considerable
‘ height from the ground, into which,
‘ when we had ascended, he drew the
‘ ladder after him.

‘ I found myself, now, in a large gallery,
‘ arched over-head, and supported by massy
‘ pillars of the most exquisite workmanship.
‘ It looked into an open space, in the centre
‘ of the building, part of which was planted
‘ with fruit-trees of different sorts, and the
‘ rest cultivated as a garden, and filled with
‘ various kinds of vegetables.

‘ When I had indulged my curiosity for
‘ some minutes, in gazing at objects so new
‘ to me, we descended into a spacious
‘ apartment, under the gallery; in the
‘ middle of which there arose a fountain,
‘ that filled a bath of the whitest marble;
‘ and, with its over-flowing, watered the
‘ garden,

garden, through which it was led in channels, cut for that purpose.

SECTION IV.

‘ As we advanced to the fountain, we were met by a young female, the sight of whom added to the wonder with which my soul was filled. She was clad in a robe of blue silk, which covered her whole form. A net of the same colour enclosed her hair, which was wrapped in woven tresses round her head, and shone like the plumes of the raven. Her eyes—’

‘ Hold! ’ interrupted Temugin, ‘ I hate descriptions of beauty. They are always drawn by an over-heated imagination; and only make the partiality of the painter ridiculous.’

The captive blushed at this rebuke; and looking down abashed for some moments, sighed and resumed his story.

‘ She started at the sight of me; and gazing with the most eager astonishment, turned her eyes frequently to my conductor, as if to enquire, who I could be.

‘ He soon understood her; and smiling at her surprise, “ Receive, my child,” said he, “ a stranger whom heaven hath

“ sent to enliven this solitary scene. Bring
“ your guest a garment to put on, when
“ he comes out of the bath; and then
“ prepare us a repast, from those stores,
“ which the bounty of heaven supplies
“ faster than we can consume; and are
“ always best bestowed upon those who
“ want them most.”

‘ On his saying this she withdrew; and
‘ returning directly with a vesture, her
‘ father and I went into the bath together.

‘ When I had purified and refreshed
‘ myself, after my fatigue, he led me back
‘ into the gallery, where she had laid for
‘ us a variety of fruits, some dried in the
‘ sun, and others fresh-plucked from the
‘ trees, with a vase of living water, just
‘ drawn from the fountain.

‘ My host, having thanked heaven for
‘ its blessings, reached me some of the
‘ fruits; and encouraged me to eat by his
‘ example.

‘ Having satisfied the cravings of na-
‘ ture, and being in some degree relieved
‘ by his beneficence, from the awe, with
‘ which his appearance had struck me, I
‘ began to recover my spirits, and look
‘ around me with less embarrassment.

“ I congratulate

“ I congratulate you, my son,” said my host, observing the alteration in my looks, “ on the comfort which this scene of desolation has administered to your distress. “ Be not ashamed. It argues not any malevolence of disposition. Nature receives consolation from society, even in misery, from the thought of not being marked for the sole object of the wrath of heaven.

“ Distress, great as ever wounded the human heart, first drove me into these wilds; where chance directed my steps to this place. The view struck me. I thought such an habitation best suited to my state; and that the hand of heaven had led me to it, to shew me the vanity of this world and all its grandeur.

“ This reflection soothed my heart; and time insensibly wore off the edge of my afflictions, so far, that in a few years I could say, I was not unhappy; nor had a wish to throw away, for any thing this world could afford, beyond what I enjoyed in this solitude. But alas! even this absence of unhappiness was too much to last! I had more to suffer before I was to be released from life.

“ But I see you are fatigued. Evening
“ draws on, when we must retire to rest.
“ While day confines the natural lords of
“ these ruins to their caves, I walk abroad,
“ sole viceroy of their empire; but yield the
“ more pleasant evening, and cool night to
“ the stronger; and retire to this place of
“ safety, while they resume their sway.

“ In the morning, when rest shall have
“ refreshed your over-laboured body, and
“ calmed the tumult in your mind, I will
“ lead you through some of the most re-
“ markable places of my dominion; and
“ afterwards gratify the curiosity, which
“ I see you feel, by relating the occurren-
“ ces of my life; from a comparison of
“ which, with your own, you can not fail
“ of receiving consolation, and encourage-
“ ment to slight the evils of so uncertain a
“ state.

“ Think that you lie this night, among
“ the ruins of a city, once the habitation
“ of myriads; but now for ages lost to hu-
“ man knowledge; and sleep contented
“ and secure, in just contempt of every
“ thing which can happen, in such a world.”
“ — Saying this, he led me to another apart-
“ ment in the gallery; and recommending
“ me

me to the protection of heaven, left me to my rest.

‘ But it was a considerable time, before the working of my mind would permit me to sleep. The change of my state, from the preceding day, appeared too great and sudden to be real. I doubted my senses; and feared that all was no more than a fond illusion of imagination.

‘ Revolving at length the whole progress of my life, my eyes were opened; and I saw the clue, with which I had been led by heaven, through the labyrinth. Elevated by this thought, I offered up my soul, in prayer and thanksgiving; and resigning myself, in humble assurance, to the same protector, soon found the blessing of quiet sleep.

SECTION V.

‘ WHEN I joined my beneficent host, the next morning, he saw the change in my looks, and congratulated me upon it. “I rejoice, my son,” said he, “at your having found that comfort, which resignation to the will of heaven, never fails to bring to a virtuous heart. A placid countenance shews a mind at

“ peace. As soon as we shall have taken
“ some food, I will fulfil my promise of
“ shewing you my dominions.”

“ We then sat down, and eating of some
“ fruits, which had been laid in readiness
“ for us, “ Had there never been a less in-
“ nocent banquet made in this place,” said
“ he smiling, “ it would not now be an heap
“ of ruins.”

“ Then observing, that I still looked
“ with wonder at every thing around me,
“ I see,” he continued, “ that you are
“ surprized at the structure of my habi-
“ tation. From ruins of the same kind,
“ which I have seen in places, once under
“ the dominion of a people from the
“ regions of the setting sun, called Romans,
“ a name perhaps unknown to you, I judge
“ that this edifice was raised for the exhi-
“ bition of shews, to entertain the popu-
“ lace, who, after feasting in these galle-
“ ries, beheld with savage pleasure the
“ fiercest of the brute creation, let loose in
“ yonder open space to indulge their natu-
“ ral antipathies; and to the disgrace of
“ humanity, men still more brutal, entering
“ into deadly combat with them, or with
“ each other, compelled by tyrant force, or
“ for the sordid sake of hire.” -

‘ Struck with horror at such an account, I could not forbear exclaiming in the indignation of my soul, “ Justly hath such an abandoned people been exterminated from the face of the earth! Justly hath a place polluted with such crimes, fallen to ruin!”

“ Take care, my son,” he returned; “ man must not presume to direct the justice, or trace the wrath of heaven, whose ways are all above his comprehension. If the most virtuous people were brought to a strict account for their actions, the most sacred places judged by what is done in them, the whole earth would long since have been an uninhabited desert; a scene of desolation and ruin.

“ But let us go, before the heat of the sun becomes too fierce, and take a view of some of the neighbouring parts of these ruins. They will reconcile you to the fate, which invariably attends all the works, all the designs of man.

“ At our return, if your curiosity shall so require, we will beguile the sultry hours of noon, in the cool shade of these arches, by a recital of the misfortunes

“ which

“ which drove me thus from human inter-
“ course.”

‘ The scenes, through which he led me,
‘ were sufficient to humble human pride;
‘ and damp the ardour of ambition, in their
‘ highest flights. Every effort of art to
‘ elude oblivion, and guard against the
‘ waste of time, was here defeated in the
‘ most mortifying manner. Statues, whose
‘ remains shewed traces of the most ex-
‘ quisite workmanship; and columns, which
‘ seemed to have been built as firm, as the
‘ foundations of the earth, lay defaced and
‘ tumbled on each other, in heaps of pro-
‘ miscuous rubbish.

“ These statues,” said my guide, see-
“ ing me struck by the sight, “ were finished
“ with so much care to perpetuate the name
“ of some noted person; these columns
“ raised with such strength to eternize the
“ memory of some famous action; but so
“ effectually hath the vain design been de-
“ feated, that during a residence of more
“ than five hundred moons among these
“ ruins, never have I met in all my searches
“ a single inscription, which might direct
“ me to the most distant conjecture, even
“ of the name of a city, on the magnifi-
“ cence of which so much labour and cost
“ were

‘ were evidently expended ; never have I seen the face of an human being, before your's, except my own immediate companions.’

‘ Such reflections were too painful to be pursued. I turned away from the objects, which suggested them ; and my conductor seeing how deeply I was affected, discontinued his intended walk, for that time ; and kindly returned with me, to his habitation ; where seating ourselves, on the verge of the fountain, I requested him to relate the history of his life, which he began in these words.

SECTION VI.

‘ THOUGH the recital I am now entering upon, will lift up the oblivious veil, which time hath kindly thrown over my griefs ; and the wounds of my heart open at the recollection of misfortunes, too mighty to admit of redress, yet for thy sake, O my son, do I willingly undertake the painful task ; as a view of the evils inevitably incident to humanity, cannot fail of administering a melancholy consolation under your present distresses, and may convey instruction for your future conduct ;

‘ conduct; the events which rule the life
‘ of man, in all its various situations, ar-
‘ sing from causes essentially alike, however
‘ they may happen to differ in circumstan-
‘ ces merely accidental.

‘ But first, as my misfortunes arose im-
‘ mediately from those of my country, and
‘ were in every sense connected with them,
‘ it will be necessary for me to look back for
‘ a moment to distant ages, in order to give
‘ a just view of the latter, and of the causes
‘ from which they sprung.

‘ When the intestine divisions, which
‘ had so long distracted the councils of the
‘ mighty city of Carthage, had at length
‘ made that queen of Africa fall a prey to
‘ the ambition of the Romans, the few
‘ who remained of the illustrious house of
‘ Barcas, disdaining to live in subjection to
‘ enemies, whom they had so often van-
‘ quished in the field, and preferring liber-
‘ ty, under the heaviest inconveniencies
‘ which nature could support, to all the
‘ luxury and magnificence of their enslaved
‘ country, resolved to leave it, and seek
‘ some happier habitation.

‘ Communicating their design according-
‘ ly, to as many as they imagined willing
‘ and worthy to share in it, they all put
‘ them-

themselves under the conduct of Narbal, nephew to the great Annibal; and secretly embarking their families and wealth in ships provided by him for the purpose, they set sail in a propitious hour, committing themselves, and all their hopes, to the guidance and protection of the gods of their country.

' The melancholy cause of their flight convincing them of the necessity of directing their course to some very distant region, Narbal, whose genius, turned to pursuits of a milder nature than the rest of his illustrious family, had led him into every climate under heaven to promote the commerce of his country, determined to seek a settlement on the island of Serendib, as the place most likely to be safe from the invasion of the Romans, those enemies to human liberty.

' Sailing therefore along the coast of Africa, they passed the mouths of the Nile, and landing at Calixene, journied by land from thence to Suez; where Narbal, who was well known, and high in respect, soon procured other ships, in which he pursued his intended voyage, till he came within sight of Dira; when a violent storm of wind arose, which in spite

‘ spite of all the skill and efforts of the ma-
‘ riners, drove him back upon the coast of
‘ Saquem. I call places by their present
‘ names, to avoid obscurity.

‘ A wise man turns every event to ad-
‘ vantage. Narbal having landed his peo-
‘ ple, to refresh them after the fatigues of
‘ the storm, went to take a view of the coun-
‘ try, which he found beautifully blessed by
‘ nature, and wanting only proper cultiva-
‘ tion to make it afford all the necessaries
‘ of life; the few inhabitants, who had fled
‘ at his approach, living poorly, content
‘ with the spontaneous produce of the earth.

‘ Pleased with this discovery, and con-
‘ struing the storm as a direction from hea-
‘ ven, he immediately chose a spot, on the
‘ banks of a beautiful river, the mouth of
‘ which formed a spacious harbour; and laid
‘ the foundations of a city, which he named
‘ Byrsa, in pious remembrance of the re-
‘ vered place of his nativity, whose unhappy
‘ fate made him afraid to adopt the inau-
‘ spicious name of Carthage.

‘ Misfortune had softened the minds of
‘ this new people; and taught them all those
‘ duties of humanity, which are too often
‘ neglected in the high blood of a prospe-
‘ rous estate. The tenderness with which
‘ they

They treated such of the natives as happened to fall into their hands, whom they constantly dismissed with presents, soon won the love and confidence of all the neighbouring people, so far that they came to them in crowds, and submitted gladly to an authority, which they saw promoted their happiness.

With such an accession, their city soon arose to a considerable degree of strength and convenience, for the safety as well as for the necessary purposes of life; and the inhabitants, encouraged by success, applied themselves to every art of industry and genius, to advance their general interest.

The hills echoed with the voice of their flocks and herds. The plains and vallies smiled in the rich livery of harvest; while the ships, which had served the melancholy purpose of their flight, now brought them the most precious merchandizes of the East, in return for their manufactures, and the superfluous produce of their new country.

SECTION VII.

‘ WHEN all things were settled in this
‘ prosperous course, Narbal, whose views
‘ were too extensive to be confined to the
‘ present moment, assembled his whole
‘ people; and laying before them the pre-
‘ sent flourishing state of their affairs, re-
‘ signed into their hands the authority with
‘ which they had entrusted him; advising
‘ them to establish some permanent form of
‘ government, which might give a ratio-
‘ nal hope of securing the continuance of
‘ their happiness.

‘ But they, who had learned wisdom in
‘ the school of adversity, were not to be
‘ tempted by any allurements of power, to
‘ forego the advantages which they expe-
‘ rienced under his care. They not only
‘ refused to accept his resignation, but in
‘ the warmth of their gratitude and confi-
‘ dence, offered to chuse him directly for
‘ their king.

‘ Though this far out-went the intention
‘ of Narbal, he thought proper to accede
‘ in appearance to their proposal for the
‘ present, as the method for accomplishing
‘ the

the great design he had in view; but declined actually receiving the crown, till he should make some preparations, which he esteemed necessary for so solemn a ceremony.

‘ The opportunities Narbal had had of comparing the various forms of government, in all the various countries thro’ which he had travelled, having enabled him to discover the defects and advantages in each, he directly applied himself with the utmost assiduity and attention, to select from all, such particular parts, as when digested into one consistent system, might be most likely to procure the happiness of the community, the great end of all government, in the purity of its original intention.

‘ When he had compleated his design, he again convened the people, on a mount which arose in the midst of the city; and having offered up sacrifices and prayers to the gods, to be propitious to his undertaking, the most venerable of the elders informed them of the cause of their being assembled.

‘ An universal burst of joyful acclamation testifying their assent, Narbal advanced to the altar, and waving his hand to

‘ demand

‘ demand attention, declared with a deter-
‘ mined look and accent, that as he wa-
‘ come there that day, to take upon him the
‘ government of the state, at their request
‘ not by his own desire, he expected they
‘ would permit him to explain the terms
‘ on which alone it was his invariable reso-
‘ lution to enter upon that equally difficult
‘ and important charge.

‘ A silence, still as death, following his
‘ words, he drew forth from his bosom
‘ written roll, and read aloud to them a
‘ particular account of the form of govern-
‘ ment which he proposed to establish, de-
‘ siring them to make their objections to
‘ the whole, or any particular part thereof,
‘ which they should disapprove; as the
‘ sanction of their approbation that day was
‘ to be for ever after irrevocable.

SECTION VIII.

‘ IT is not necessary to enter into a mi-
‘ nute detail of all the several parts of his
‘ system. A short sketch of the leading
‘ principles of it, will sufficiently shew its
‘ excellence.

‘ Justly sensible that the prosperity of a
‘ state is necessarily derived from and de-
‘ pendent

pendent on the favour of heaven, he ordained, that all the sacred rites of religion should be constantly performed with piety and proper order; and to enable the persons set apart for the performance of them to attend to that duty, without interruption from the anxieties and avocations of domestic care, and give them that respect in the eyes of the people, which is indispensably necessary to add weight and influence to precepts, he appointed them a competent support out of the public revenue, without laying them under the dangerous necessity of receiving that support from the voluntary contributions of particulars, who might either want ability or inclination to give it, and therefore would hold the demander in disesteem; as a right to enforce such demand, by compulsive means, the only remedy in such a situation, must raise animosities which would prejudice the people against his precepts, as well as against himself.

‘ The miseries which he had invariably seen the people groan under, in those countries where the prince knows no law but his own will, and executes that law himself, over-balanced every temptation with

‘ with which power could assail his generous heart, and determined him against a form of government, where greatness is purchased at so dear a price; as on the other hand, he had before his eyes, in the unhappy fate of his native country, a melancholy proof of the evils attending those governments, in which the supreme power is lodged solely in the collective body of the people, whose councils are too often dictated by caprice or intrigue, and whose motions, where the object is not instantly present, are as slow and feeble, as their resolutions are precipitate and rash.

‘ Between these two extremes, the wisdom of Narbal chose a mean, in which he hoped to avoid the evils incident to both.

‘ To give dignity and vigour to the state, he ordained, that it should be governed by a king; as he also ordained, that the crown should descend by regular succession in one family, to obviate the fatal consequences which attend the struggles of ambition; being too well read in the human heart, to trust the people with the right of chusing their sovereign on every succession; a right inestimable in its first principle, where reason directs

‘ the

the choice to merit only, but liable to such abuse in the practice, as over-balances every advantage.

‘ To prevent the abuse of power, when thus rendered hereditary and certain, he appointed limits to the authority of the crown, by laws which ascertained the rights of the people; which laws were to be acknowledged by every successive sovereign, on his ascending the throne; and his observation of them made the condition of the people’s obedience.

‘ To assist the sovereign with their advice, in the arduous affairs of government, he instituted a council, composed of the elders and chiefs of the Carthaginian families, who had been the companions of his flight, to whom he joined a few of the natives, most eminent for their virtue, to obviate any apprehension, that their interests might be sacrificed to those of their new fellow-subjects.

‘ That this council should not be subject to the influences of fear or mercenary motives, he appointed them several honourable and important privileges, and consigned to each a considerable property out of the public stock, which privilege and property were to descend to their posterity,

‘ rity, who were to be the hereditary coun-
‘ sellors of the king, and guardians of the
‘ laws, so long as they persevered in the
‘ principles of private as well as public
‘ virtue, for which they were raised to such
‘ honour; but on their falling off from
‘ them, or dissipating the property thus
‘ given to secure their independance, all
‘ those advantages were to be forfeited,
‘ their families reduced to a private rank,
‘ and their places filled with persons more
‘ worthy of them.

‘ Lest this preeminence should tempt
‘ this hereditary council to infringe upon
‘ the authority of the sovereign, or join
‘ him in oppressing the people, above
‘ whom they were thus raised, Narbal
‘ instituted a second council, inferior in
‘ rank, to be chosen annually by the people
‘ from among themselves, to watch over
‘ their interests, and defeat any attempt
‘ which might be made either by the sove-
‘ reign, or the superior council, to exceed
‘ the limits respectively appointed to them;
‘ which second council was to be convened
‘ at a certain time in every year, to exa-
‘ mine past transactions, and concert future
‘ measures; during their attendance on
‘ which duties, they were to enjoy the

‘ same

same privileges as the superior council; but at the end of that attendance, to return to their former private state; and this short duration of their authority was ordained, that in case this representative council, or any of its members, should deviate from the sense of their constituents, or betray their confidence, the people might have a timely remedy in their power, by correcting their choice; and entrusting their rights into more faithful hands, before any evil or error committed by them should take too deep a root.

By these two councils, in conjunction with the sovereign, were to be framed all future laws for the government of the state, as well in its interior policy, as in respect to its connections and intercourse with other states; which conjunction was so essential, that the dissent of the sovereign, or either council, prevented the establishment of the law proposed: and of all laws, the execution was committed to the king, with a power of appointing persons proper for that purpose; but under this restriction, that no person should be appointed to execute the laws,

‘ who was himself known to persist in the violation of any law.

‘ And lastly, to support the dignity of the crown, and defray the necessary expences of the state, he appointed a certain portion of lands to be cultivated by such delinquents, as by their crimes should deserve the loss of liberty ; being sensible of the absurdity and injustice to the public, of depriving it of the service of its members, by punishing any crime, beside murder, with the death of the criminal ; and that as all other crimes proceed ultimately from idleness, their proper punishment is labour, the apprehension of which accumulated as far as the strength of the criminal could possibly support, and continued for his life, must be much more effectual to prevent the commission of such crimes, than any other punishment, however severe, but of short duration ; and till there should be a sufficient number of such delinquents, or if happily there never should, then by the lower ranks of the people for hire, to be paid out of the produce of their labour.

‘ To such a system of government it was impossible to make any objection. The people

people unanimously testified their approbation of it in the strongest manner; and Narbal, having sworn at the altar to preserve it inviolably, in every respect and instance, to the utmost of his power; and imprecated the vengeance of heaven upon any of his successors who should attempt to subvert it, he received the crown from the hands of the chief priest, amid the universal acclamations and blessings of all present; who in return swore fidelity to him, and obedience to the government, which he planned for their mutual benefit; concluding the sacred solemnity with oblations and prayers to the gods for their blessing and protection.

SECTION IX.

THE same wisdom and public spirit which had dictated this form of government, appeared in every act of Narbal's reign. He promoted virtue, and punished vice. He secured the civil rights and private property of his subjects, by plain and equitable laws. He established order in the state; and regulated its internal policy. He restrained ostentatious

‘ expence, luxury, and excess. He encouraged industry, and application to the useful arts; and his own conduct was the best comment on his laws.

‘ When he had settled these most immediate objects of his care, he extended it to others more remote, though not less important.

‘ He knew that industry is the true parent of strength; and commerce the only inexhaustible fund of wealth to a state: but he had learned from the unhappy fate of Carthage, that even commerce may be pursued too far, and that excess of wealth is weakness. He therefore directed the spirit of industry to a more solid object.

‘ Of all the ways, in which the combined force of the human mind and body can be exerted, the most advantageous, and at the same time the most truly honourable, is agriculture. It creates that wealth, which commerce only collects: it supports the arts, by supporting life for the exercise of them: it increases population, and provides for that increase. In a word, as much as the supply of natural, is more important than that of artificial wants; as much

‘ as

‘ as life itself, than the phantastic emoluments of it, by so much is agriculture superior to every other art: and for this reason, the first and great aim of Narbal’s policy, through the whole course of his reign, was to improve agriculture, and promote it by every encouragement of interest and honour.

‘ Nor was his care confined within the circle of his own kingdom. He studied the genius and interests of all the neighbouring nations, and laid down rules for the conduct proper to be observed in every possible intercourse with them.

‘ Though the first aim of Narbal’s policy was peace, and his first laws calculated for the cultivation of it, he was too well acquainted with human nature to expect that such a blessing could be preserved to his people without the support of force, to repel the attacks of envy, interest, and ambition.

‘ To establish this force, therefore, in constant readiness for so necessary a purpose, he ordained that all the Byrsan youth should learn the warlike arts, and appear at certain stated times in every year before him, to shew their expertness at them; encouraging emulation by ho-

‘ norary prizes; but at the same time
‘ taking every possible precaution to sup-
‘ press ambition and an indiscriminate pa-
‘ sion for war.

‘ The wisdom of these institutions soon
‘ appeared. His people was held in esteem
‘ and respect by all the neighbouring
‘ nations. They were happy in them-
‘ selves; and their country flourished in all
‘ the blessings of industry and peace; and
‘ as far as human reason could look for-
‘ ward into time, the firmness of the basis
‘ upon which his happiness was founded,
‘ secured its duration.

‘ But why do I dwell thus fondly on the
‘ excellencies of a government, which is
‘ now no more? The theme must be dis-
‘ interesting to you; but my mind is so
‘ filled with the revered idea, that in the
‘ overflowing of my heart, I have insensi-
‘ bly ran into lengths, beyond my first
‘ design.’—Saying this he wiped away the
tears.—

‘ Imitate not his ptolixy,’ interrupted
Temugin, ‘ by a description of grief, as
disgusting in your repetition, as it was
groundless in him. As well may it be
expected to make the sea stand still, as
to frame a system of government, which
will

‘will not change. Every hour produces incidents, which alter its form, as necessarily as the motion of the air moves the face of the waters. But such is the wisdom of speculative legislators. Proceed.’—

The captive bowed his head in submission to a reproof, the force of which he felt; and thus resumed his story.

SECTION X.

‘HEAVEN,’ continued my host, ‘rewarded the virtue of Narbal, in the amplest manner. He saw all his pious labours crowned with success; and died full of years, and full of glory, leaving his crown to a son, worthy to succeed him.

‘The kingdom of Byrsa flourished for many ages, under a long succession of princes of the race of Narbal; who all adhered faithfully to the great principles of his government, every change which became necessary, in the change of times, being regulated by them.

‘But unhappily the same care was not observed, perhaps was not possible to be observed, in the minuter matters of do-

‘ mestic policy. A long course of prosperity made the Byrsans forget, that their state owed its origin to misfortune; and wealth, accumulated by frugality, was thought to remove the necessity of that virtue.

‘ The natural wants of man are few, and easily supplied; but the artificial are infinite, and insatiable. Not content with the necessaries of life, he looks around for the conveniences, from which to the luxuries the ascent is insensible.

‘ No sooner had the sumptuary laws, so strictly enjoined by Narbal, begun to be relaxed, than the spirit of commerce, consequentially, and designedly restrained by them, broke through all bounds; and ransacked every quarter of the earth to gratify the phantastick demands of luxury and caprice.

‘ The opportunities, which this opened, of bartering from one to another, the various products of all the various nations, with whom they traded, afforded them such gain, that as their wealth had made them luxurious, so their luxury made them wealthy.

‘ The effects of this were soon felt. The wealth of individuals exceeded that

‘ of

of the state, in every degree of just proportion: and their expence exceeded that wealth. A false refinement universally took place of that sublime simplicity of sentiment and manners, which had been the honourable characteristic of the Byrsan nation. Their buildings were raised more for ostentation than use. Their garments were fashioned by vanity. Their food was chosen merely for its expence, however disagreeable to the taste, or destructive to health. Respect was measured by riches. Honours were openly sold; or conferred for services, in their nature most dishonourable. Virtue and merit were depressed by contempt and neglect; while vice found favour, and injudicious mercy encouraged crimes, by disarming justice of its terrors.

‘ In a word, the whole business of life was dissipation; and every thing serious, every regard to decency, moral virtue, and religion, was turned into ridicule.

‘ In order to carry on their commerce to greater advantage, the Byrsans planted colonies, in different parts of the earth, which drained their own country of its most useful inhabitants; none who were not possessed of considerable wealth, or

‘ whose profusions did not immediately minister to the gratification of luxury, finding any encouragement, or even being able to live at home, where the fascination of example had made a profusion in expence unavoidable; and idleness and vanity had so far enhanced the price of the indispensable necessaries of life, as to involve the industrious poor, whose labour is the natural support, as their numbers make the real strength of a state, in all the miseries of want; and oblige them to seek subsistence elsewhere.

‘ Time shewed the consequence of this conduct. These colonies, increasing in numbers, in proportion to the depopulation of their mother country, by such emigrations; and flourishing in all the arts carried from thence, at length felt their own strength; and scorning a dependence no longer supported by sufficient power, took the first plausible occasion to shake it off; and ever after carried themselves like states allied upon equal terms, rather than subjects.

‘ Nor was the exterior polity of the Byrsans, ruled by the principles of greater wisdom, or virtue. Proud of their wealth, they looked with contempt on every poorer nation;

‘ nation ; and blindly mistaking that wealth
‘ for strength, scrupled not to invade their
‘ rights, as views of interest or ambition
‘ chanced to tempt them.

‘ Such a conduct often necessarily engag-
‘ ed them in wars, with the neighbouring
‘ nations ; and gave the sanction of justice
‘ to the attacks, which envy of their pro-
‘ sperity had before designed against them ;
‘ but as these attacks were always made on
‘ some particular occasion, and singly by
‘ the people then aggrieved, they constant-
‘ ly failed of their effect, and only increas-
‘ ed by such exertion, the power they were
‘ intended to over-turn.

‘ In this manner did they proceed for
‘ many ages, flourishing in a false prospe-
‘ rity, the cause of which insensibly under-
‘ mined its foundation, like a tree, grow-
‘ ing by the side of a river, whose waters,
‘ at the same time, that they make its
‘ branches spread, and cover them with
‘ bloom, wash away the earth from its
‘ roots ; till it falls unexpectedly in the
‘ midst of its glory, over-turned by the
‘ slightest gust of wind ; and buries every
‘ thing near it, in its ruins.

SECTION XI.

‘ IN the commotions which shook the earth, when the Arabians, under the pretext of propagating their religion, impiously ravaged and enslaved the greater part of the world, as if the benign Father of creation could be pleased with the misery and desolation of his works, a body of Egyptians, who had escaped their fury, settled themselves in a mountainous and barren tract of land, which lay between the country of the Byrfans, and the desert, over which they had fled with their families, in their despair.’—

‘ Appalled at this arraignment of the religion, in which I had been educated; of principles, which I had ever been taught to hold most sacred, all my respect for my host could not prevent my interrupting him.

‘ Mercy, gracious heaven! I exclaimed, what do I hear? Can any duty be more incumbent on man, than to propagate the true religion, even by force, where persuasion fails? Is not every man, who refuses to receive it, an enemy to God, and as such to be cut off from among men?’

‘ And

And is it not a most impious breach of that duty, a prostitution of benevolence to exert it, toward him ?

‘ Beware, O my son,’ he replied, with a look and accent of the greatest earnestness, ‘ beware of intruding thyself into the councils of heaven ! Has the Supreme Being told you, that only one religion is acceptable to him ? And that the religion, which you profess, is that one ? If you alledge a particular revelation of your religion, do not others rest upon a like foundation ? And doth not every man believe his own to be true ?

‘ In such a contrariety, by what virtue have you alone merited the preference of being right ? Or rather, how hath the place of your birth merited that preference ? For by that was determined the mode of your religion : And would a matter of such importance have been left depending on a circumstance so merely accidental ?

‘ Beside, to allow what you contend for, that your religion is the only one, which is right, hath the Deity delegated to you a power, which he hath not exerted himself, of compelling all men to think alike ? Or, if he intends such compulsion, doth

‘ he

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‘ he want your assistance to effect it ? Can
‘ not he, who createth the mind, mould it
‘ as he pleaseth ? And is it not vain ; is it
‘ not impious for man to attempt controul-
‘ ing that which the Deity hath left free ?

“ Nor is it less so, to attempt usurping his
• vengeance : If he would punish, are not
• famine and pestilence, as swords, in his
• hand ? Does not the thunder roar ? Do
• not the foundations of the earth tremble
• at his word ? Universal benevolence is the
• sacrifice most acceptable to heaven ; nor
• can any religion be derived from thence,
• which would enjoin a breach of that inva-
• riable, eternal duty.”

“ Then observing that I was ready to
• burst with indignation, and eagerness to
• controvert what he said ; ‘ Repress your
• zeal, my son,’ he continued, softening his
• voice, and regarding me, with a look of
• inexpressible tenderness ; and examine dis-
• passionately, before you presume to judge.
• Influenced by the same motives, I once
• thought as you do now ; and held in de-
• testation every religion, but my own ; or
• rather that of the country, in which I had
• happened to be born, which I had re-
• ceived implicitly, without examination, or

‘ proof,

proof. But reason and experience have since opened my eyes, to my error.

If only one manner of worship could be acceptable to the Deity, would he not have made that manner known to all mankind, at their creation? Would he not have made the mind conceive it as invariably, as he made the senses represent their objects? Would he not have made it as self-evident, as the foundation of moral virtue, which is received without variation, by all mankind *.—If eternal unhappiness was to be the necessary consequence of differing from this manner, would it have been consistent, either with his goodness, or his justice, to have left by so much the greater part of mankind ignorant of it? This would have been to create them on purpose for unhappiness. An imputation, which is the greatest offence possible for man to offer to God, so far as respects himself only.

Consider, that the mode of worship, which prevails most in the world, is not known to the hundredth, perhaps not to the thousandth part of its inhabitants.—

Consider

* *Probably, Do, AS YOU WOULD BE DONE BY.*

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‘ Consider also how many ages have passed away, before any of the present modes were known at all; and then, you will see the impious absurdity of excluding from mercy, all but the few professors of a particular one among them.

‘ Who then shall dare to call the man, who professes a different mode of worship, an enemy to heaven? And how can it be a duty to attempt propagating by force, an uniformity, which is not prescribed? Should he not rather conclude from its not having been prescribed, that the variety is pleasing; in the same manner as the beauty of sensible objects ariseth from variation in their parts. Wherever I hear the praises of the Deity sung, my soul shall accompany them, without objecting to the manner; nor will I hazard the profanation of so sacred a duty, by arrogantly attempting to obtrude any other.

‘ To prove the necessary obligation of mutual benevolence, man was created in a state of indispensable dependance upon the assistance of others, from the first moment of his life. Shall he not, then, give that assistance, which he has received; and must continue to receive?

‘ Have

Have all, who have administered relief to his wants, professed the same religion with him? And would their professing another make their assistance ineffectual to his relief? Be the religion of a man what it will, while the morsel of bread, which I receive from his hand, yields me wholesome nourishment, never will I think myself absolved from, much less interdicted the duty of administering relief to his wants. Nothing less than an immediate interposition of the Deity, by a total change of natural effects, being sufficient to abrogate a law, made necessary by him, to my nature.

‘In a word, my son, the worship, truly acceptable to the Deity, is the immediate act of the soul, and consists in gratitude for his blessings, and resignation to his will; while I pay that with sincerity of heart, I fear not his taking offence at the posture of my body, or any other—’.

‘Cease!’ interrupted Temugin, ‘nor waste time in repeating the proofs of principles self-evident. Some mode of worship is necessary; and since no particular one has been universally established by that power, which alone hath the right, every country is entitled to pursue its

‘its own; and every individual obliged to
‘observe it, in his actions, which only are
‘subject to human authority.’

SECTION XII.

‘THE Byrsans,’ resumed the captive,
‘who at the time of the arrival of those
‘strangers were beginning to deviate from
‘the sage institutions of Narbal, and turn
‘all their attention from agriculture to
‘commerce, gave no obstruction to this
‘new settlement; either not thinking those
‘mountains worth cultivating, or perhaps
‘not being yet so intoxicated by good for-
‘tune, as to forget the origin of their own
‘state.

‘For several ages there subsisted but
‘little intercourse between the Byrsans and
‘their new neighbours, who had assumed
‘the name of Coptes; the Byrsans, in the
‘pride of prosperity, disdaining to take
‘notice of a people struggling with dis-
‘tress; and the Coptes, in the sullen diffi-
‘dence of that distress, keeping at an
‘equal distance from such unfeeling neigh-
‘bours.

‘While the Byrsans therefore were ex-
‘tending their commerce to the extremi-
‘ties

ties of the earth, and revelling in the luxuries which it produced, the Coptes, precluded by their situation from every foreign intercourse, applied themselves entirely to agriculture, in which the natural disadvantages of their country obliged them to exert all their industry, in order to procure the indispensable necessities of life.

‘ But these disadvantages were more than made amends for by the consequences. They secured them from the pernicious effects of luxury, and all the train of vices and evils which attend on wealth. If they possessed but little, they wanted still less! They were strong in body, and resolute of spirit; and their habitations were filled with a numerous and healthy progeny.

‘ In the course of time, such unremitting industry changed the face of the country, and remedied all the unkindnesses of nature. The hills were covered with flocks and herds. The song of the husbandman echoed in the vallies; and the voice of plenty and content was heard through all the land.

‘ Such a change at length raised the envy and avarice of the Byrsans, who

‘ were

“ were then in the zenith of their glory.
“ They sent haughtily to the Coptes, to
“ demand possession of their country, which
“ they alledged to belong to themselves;
“ and without even waiting for an answer,
“ prepared to march a powerful army to
“ seize by force, that which they were
“ conscious they had no right to receive
“ peaceably.

“ The Coptes naturally were surprized
“ at such a demand; and directly sent an
“ embassy of the most respectable persons
“ in their state, to shew the injustice of it.
“ They alledged the length of the time,
“ during which they had been in undi-
“ sturbed possession of the country, which
“ their ancestors had found desolate, and
“ unpossessed by any inhabitants. That
“ the Byrsans, far from claiming any right
“ to it at that time, as they certainly would
“ have done, had they thought it belonged
“ to them, - took not the least notice, much
“ less offence at their settling there; nor
“ had ever mentioned such a claim in any
“ of the transactions which had occasion-
“ ally passed between the two nations since.
“ And finally, that the title of the Coptes
“ to the country which they inhabited,
“ was equally good with that of the

“ Byrsans

Byrsans to theirs; both people having been compelled by necessity to fly from their native homes, and fix themselves in the same manner, wherever they could find a place of refuge."

'Unanswerable as these arguments were, they had no force with the Byrsans, who scarcely deigned to wait till the king should give the ambassadors an audience.

'At this unhappy period commences the sad story of my misfortunes, which were so immediately derived from those of my country, that I thought it necessary to give this short detail, as an introduction to the events of my own life.'

The entrance of an eunuch to acquaint Temugin with the arrival of an express from the general of one of his armies, interrupted the captive at this place. He was commanded to withdraw, and wait the emperor's pleasure to hear the continuation of his narrative at some other time.

End of the SECOND Book.

THE
HISTORY
OF
ARSACE,
PRINCE OF BETLIS.

BOOK THE THIRD.

SECTION I.

THE curiosity of Temugin, who had heard something of the destruction of the Byrsan state, and was desirous to be better informed of it, was so highly interested by the captive's story, that he ordered his attendance, the next evening, when he resumed it, as follows.

‘An illustrious ancestry,’ continued Himilco, (so was my venerable host called) ‘is the deepest disgrace to a degenerate offspring;

‘offspring; but where it excites virtuous emulation, it reflects additional lustre upon every new access of honour, sealing it with the sanction of inheritance; and may be mentioned without incurring the reproach of vanity.

‘The house of my father derived its origin from Narbal, by his youngest son, Mago; whose descendants always justified by their merits, the claim which their blood gave them to the first offices in the state.

‘My father, who beheld with grief every deviation, from the wise institutions of his royal progenitor, took particular care to instruct me in the true sense and spirit of them, from a fond hope that heaven would one day offer some favourable opportunity for restoring the government, to the purity and vigour of its first principles; as he well foresaw, from its present relaxation, that some great change must necessarily be near. But happy for him, he lived not to see the accomplishment of his presage.

‘To prove the excellency of these institutions, by comparison with those of other nations; and to avoid the dangerous influence of such an example, as the manners

{ of

‘ of the Byrsan youth then exhibited, upon
‘ an unexperienced mind, my father resolved
‘ that I should travel into foreign lands, as
‘ soon as reason was ripened to sufficient
‘ strength, to form a proper judgment
‘ upon a personal knowledge of the ways
‘ of man.

‘ Having prepared all things for this
‘ purpose, he led me into his garden, on
‘ the evening preceding the day appointed
‘ for my departure, and seating me beside
‘ him, on the margin of a fountain, ad-
‘ dressed himself to me in these words
‘ words, indelibly written on the tablet of
‘ my heart.

“ I see, with delight,” said he, “ my
“ son, the impression, which the precepts
“ of my care have made upon thy mind;
“ and I fear not but heaven will enable
“ thee to carry them into execution.

“ To facilitate this great end, I send
“ thee to search for wisdom in the world;
“ To read the heart of man, in his
“ actions; and from them learn to distin-
“ guish between the appearance, and
“ reality of things.

“ Were I to consult the tender impulse
“ of nature, I should keep thee still in my
“ bosom; but I prefer thy advantage to

“ my

Vol

“ my own pleasure; (should I not rather
“ say that thy advantage is my greatest
“ pleasure!) and I part with thee for a
“ time, in assured hope of thy returning
“ enriched with wisdom and virtue to
“ support the feeble steps of my old age
“ down the hill of life; and crown my
“ urn with the sacred honour of having
“ begotten a son, worthy to serve his
“ country.

“ When I say, that my hope of thy
“ happy return is assured, I would not be
“ understood to mean, that there are no
“ dangers in thy way. The floating sands
“ of the desert, the rage of the tempest,
“ or the hidden rocks in the sea, are less
“ dangerous than the allurements, vice
“ lays in the way of the traveller: Allure-
“ ments, which it requires the immediate
“ guidance of heaven to avoid, they offer
“ themselves in such various shapes, and
“ so speciously simulate the very virtues,
“ which they counteract.

“ I will not burthen thy mind with a
“ repetition of the advice, which it has
“ been the pleasing task of my life, to in-
“ stil into it. The few following hints, as
“ they relate immediately to the scene, on
“ which you are just entering, are all I

“ shall say at present; and then commit
“ thy steps to that guidance, which is
“ never withheld from virtue, if sought
“ with humble, and ardent supplication.

“ Open thine eyes, and thine ears; but
“ bar the door of thy lips. Ask no
“ questions! Enter not into arguments.
“ Concern not yourself in the affairs of
“ others; nor reveal your own, where the
“ importance of the occasion doth not
“ make such a confidence indispensable.

“ Silence is universally esteemed to be
“ the consequence of wisdom. It there-
“ fore engages confidence; and commands
“ respect.

“ If you meet any thing, which you
“ do not directly comprehend, conlude
“ that the difficulty arises from your own
“ inattention; and consider the matter
“ again, with better care. One doubt,
“ thus solved by yourself, will open your
“ mind more, by exercising its powers,
“ than the solution of many, by another.

“ As for arguing, instead of elucidating
“ difficulties, it only creates animosity, and
“ confirms error; the pride of man mak-
“ ing him more anxious to support his own
“ opinion, than to investigate truth. And
“ this was the reason of that mysterious

“ silence

silence enjoined to his pupils, by one of the wisest of the western sages.

“This, my son, is the sum of what I have to recommend to your attention. Careful observation of these few plain rules, will conduct you safely through the multitudes, whom you must mix with to acquire knowledge.”—Saying this, he laid his hand upon my head; and praying to heaven to confirm the blessings, which he heaped upon me, dismissed me with a kiss of peace, and paternal love.

SECTION II.

‘I will not lead you thro’ every weary step I measured, nor recount common incidents, however interesting to myself at the time. Such recitals, though flattering to that consequence in which man is too apt to hold himself, only tire and disgust the hearer.

‘Having passed thro’ several regions, in all of which, under appearances, and by means utterly contradictory to each other, I saw the same end of present gratification universally pursued, with the most anxious and insatiable eagerness, I

G 2 ‘arrived

‘ arrived at length upon the banks of the
‘ great river Euphrates, whither I was
‘ drawn by an irresistible desire to receive
‘ instruction from the mouth of the sage
‘ Myrza, the fame of whose wisdom and
‘ sanctity had gone forth into all the
‘ nations of the East.

‘ The sun was just disappearing, as I
‘ approached the habitation of the sage.
‘ It was a grotto, formed by the hand of
‘ Nature, at the foot of an hill, whose
‘ brow hung over the river. He sat in the
‘ entrance, contemplating the smiles of
‘ nature in that placid hour; and accom-
‘ panying in his heart the voice of gratitude
‘ and gladness, which echoed the adoration
‘ of every living thing around.

‘ He no sooner perceived my approach
‘ than he advanced to meet me, prevent-
‘ ing, by a friendly embrace, those pro-
‘ fessions of reverence, which his appear-
‘ ance commanded equally with his fame.

‘ Though report proclaimed him to
‘ have measured more than twice the usual
‘ life of man, and knowledge was written
‘ in characters of deepest reflection in his
‘ face, his eye had not lost the penetrating
‘ fire, nor his limbs the strength of youth.

‘ He

He was crowned with all the honours,
but exempt from the infirmities of age.

Having kindly enquired the motive
of my coming, he led me to his habita-
tion, at the entrance of which he resumed
his seat, placing me beside him, while
my slaves pitched their tents among some
lofty trees at a little distance on the bank
of the river; then observing that I had
not yet overcome the awe with which his
presence had struck me, "Knowledge,
" my son," said he, with a smile of the
most encouraging complacency, "is a
gift bestowed with a sparing hand, and
to but very few; the utmost abilities of
man reaching little farther than to dis-
cover his own ignorance. The ambition
of it, however, is most laudable; and
when properly pursued, seldom fails of a
just reward, in the more valuable acqui-
sition of wisdom."

"If the observations of my life can con-
duce to your acquiring either, I shall be
happy in the communication of them.
At present the departing sun reminds us
of the debt we owe for the blessings of
the finished day." — Saying this, he
turned his face to the west, and falling
upon his knees, poured forth his evening

‘ song of adoration and praise, in such exalted strains, as rapt my soul in extasy I had never felt before, while I joined instinctively with him.

‘ Having performed this sacred duty, he arose; and turning to me, his eyes still sparkling with rapture, which seemed to raise him above man, “ My son,” said he, “ the subject of thy enquiries is too extensive, too complex, to be discussed in a short time. The evening closeth apace; and nature requireth rest. To-morrow I will meet thee with the young day, in yonder citron grove, and give thee every information in my power.”

SECTION III.

‘ SOON as the angel of the morning had chased away the spirits of darkness from the face of the earth, I repaired to the grove, where I waited not long, before I was joined by the sage.

‘ After some expressions of benevolence and regard, he led me to a bower, woven by his own hands; and looking at the various birds which winged their way around, “ How different, my son,”

‘ said

“ said he, “ are the beauties of this scene, “ from those which gild the view of even- “ ing? Satisfied with the enjoyments of “ the day, the feathered race then seek “ their homes, and sing themselves to “ sleep. Now busy care, awakening with “ the sun, sends them abroad again to “ seek the same enjoyments; secure of “ finding what they want, because their “ wants are only those of nature, who “ has provided amply for all her off- “ spring.

“ So happily would the circle of man’s “ day wind up, were his desires limited “ within the same bounds. I speak of the “ desires of reason as well as sense; for “ reason and nature never differ. A “ wish for something more would not pre- “ vent his enjoyment; nor disappointment “ break his rest. Then would he not “ complain, that the way to knowledge “ is without end; that every new acquisi- “ tion only opens a new want; but justly “ grateful for the portion dispensed to him, “ reduce it into practice, instead of wast- “ ing his days in endless search for more.”

“ Surely,’ I returned, ‘ O my father, the “ way to knowledge cannot be without end “ to him, who sets out early, and is so

‘ happy as to have an instructor capable of
‘ directing his steps?’

“ Instruction,” he replied, “ is to the
“ mind, what food is to the body. As, in
“ this, repletion counteracts nourishment,
“ so objects presented to the mind too sud-
“ denly, or in too rapid a succession, by
“ instruction, without allowing time to
“ arrange them in due order, investigate
“ their properties, and prove their agree-
“ ment by comparison, instead of inform-
“ ing only burden reason, and bring not
“ knowledge, but confusion.”

‘ Wretch that I am! I exclaimed, sur-
‘ prized, and alarmed at what he said,
‘ Have I then only wasted my youth in
‘ listening to instruction? Are the precepts
‘ of my father no more than a burden to
‘ my mind?’

“ I mean not so,” answered the sage;
“ instruction is of the greatest advantage
“ to a youthful mind. It awakens its
“ powers, improves their strength by ex-
“ ercise, and points out the proper objects
“ of their exertion.

“ The precepts of thy father have laid
“ a foundation for knowledge. To raise
“ the superstructure must be your own
“ task. That which is derived only from
“ precept

“ precept being no more than a shadow,
“ which vanishes on attempting to apply it
“ to use.

“ Mustapha Eber Ibrahim was born in
“ the city of Bagdat, where he gained
“ such reputation in his trade of a jeweller,
“ that he soon became rich.

“ Encouraged by this success, he re-
“ solved to breed up his two sons, Kerker
“ and Haffan, to the same trade; and that
“ in such a manner, as he flattered himself
“ would enable them to rise to greater
“ eminence in it, than had ever been
“ attained by any former artist.

“ Mustapha was himself utterly un-
“ learned. Practice had taught him to
“ know the value of gems and metals in
“ which he wrought, and to fashion and
“ arrange them in such forms and combi-
“ nations, as should display their colours,
“ and employ their properties to most ad-
“ vantage. But all his knowledge ended
“ there. When he was asked the cause of
“ these properties, and why such forms
“ and arrangements produced those effects,
“ he was unable to give an answer satis-
“ factory even to himself, much less to the
“ enquirer.

“ The pride of wealth being hurt by
“ consciousness of this ignorance, he de-
“ termined to save his sons from such dis-
“ grace, by giving them a liberal educa-
“ tion before he should begin to teach
“ them his art.

“ For this purpose, he procured them
“ the most celebrated masters, in all the
“ several branches of philosophy, who
“ executed their charge with the greatest
“ fidelity, though not with equal success
“ to their pupils, the turn and powers of
“ whose minds were totally different from
“ each other.

“ Kerker, the elder, was lively in the
“ extreme degree. His imagination out-
“ ran the precepts of his instructor. With-
“ out waiting to examine farther than the
“ first glance, he catched at the conclu-
“ sion, before they could adduce half the
“ proofs; and his tongue never wanted
“ the happiest words to express his con-
“ ceptions.

“ Hassan, on the contrary, was given
“ to doubt. He paid no respect to autho-
“ rity, nor would admit any thing with-
“ out the clearest proof, in examining
“ which, he was so cautious and slow,
“ that he wore out the patience of instruc-
“ tors,

“tors, who hesitated not to pronounce
“him incapable of learning, and therefore
“counselled his father to apply him
“wholly to his trade.

“While Kerker, consequently, was in-
“dulging himself in ranging through the
“boundless regions of theory, and rea-
“soning upon causes and effects according
“to the various systems of the philosophy
“he had studied, Hassan was obliged to
“confine his thoughts to his labour; and
“to rest satisfied with that small pittance
“of knowledge, which he could elicit
“from experience.

“Though Mustapha felt this disap-
“pointment of his hopes in his younger
“son with the fondness of a father, he
“found consolation in the rapid progress
“made by the elder; and his heart ex-
“ulted when he heard him display his
“learning to the crowds whom his fame
“collected round him.

“But this exultation lasted not long.
“The knowledge of Kerker was merely
“speculative; and by misapplication de-
“feated the end it was designed to obtain.
“Confiding in it, he had disdained to
“apply himself to the gradual practice of
“an art, with the principles of which he
“was

“ was so well acquainted ; and thinking he
“ could execute whatever he thought he
“ understood, he affected to mount at
“ once to that eminence of skill, which
“ can be attained only by long and careful
“ application.

“ He could explain the nature of pre-
“ cious stones, and account for the dif-
“ ferent degrees of their perfection ; but
“ when they were placed before him, he
“ was unable to distinguish those degrees ;
“ and often bought the worst instead of the
“ best. He could describe the effects pro-
“ duced by the various combinations of
“ their colours, but he knew not how to
“ combine them so as to produce the
“ effects he described.

“ The consequence naturally was, that
“ his knowledge was turned into ridicule.
“ He lost his business, and wasted the
“ wealth earned by his father, in so much
“ that he would have wanted a morsel of
“ bread in his old age, had he not found
“ a resource in his younger son ; who
“ thinking for himself, while the elder
“ read the opinions of others, and labour-
“ ing while he talked, had drawn real
“ knowledge from its true source, expe-
“ rience ; and arrived regularly at the
“ end,

“ end, which his brother had missed, by
“ mistaking the effect for the cause, and
“ beginning where he should have ended.”

“ Surely, my father, said I, observing
“ that Myrza paused at these words to leave
“ the application to myself, the moral of
“ this tale cannot have reference to my
“ case! To think of arriving at excellence
“ in manual arts by speculative instruction,
“ without a regular gradation of practice,
“ were most absurd. But may I not dare
“ to doubt if science is within the same
“ rule! Is there not, for instance, an essen-
“ tial difference between polity and mecha-
“ nism? Between knowledge of the in-
“ terests of nations, and of the value of
“ precious stones?”

“ The difference between science and
“ art,” replied the sage, “ so far as they
“ have reference to the uses of life (and to
“ consider them farther were foreign to the
“ present purpose) is confined to their
“ objects, and extends not to their manner
“ of operation.

“ Even in science merely speculative,
“ which terminates in itself, the mind
“ proceeds by as regular a gradation, as
“ the hand in works of art: but because
“ the steps of this gradation are not so
“ immediately

“ immediately seen, the vanity of man
“ overlooks it, and attempts to rise to the
“ summit at a single bound; and hence
“ proceed most of the errors which defeat
“ his designs.

“ Instruction teaches the mind the use
“ of its own powers; and points out the
“ directest path to knowledge; but there
“ its purpose ends. To acquire that
“ knowledge, the mind must prove the
“ truth of precept by practice. A specu-
“ lative jeweller is not liable to commit
“ greater errors in his profession, than is
“ a speculative king.

“ Can it be thought less difficult to dif-
“ cover the different characters, and apply
“ their abilities properly, which is the per-
“ fection of the art of governing, or po-
“ lity; than to know the value of jewels,
“ and combine their colours? Why is not
“ government arrived at greater perfec-
“ tion; and the interests of nations more
“ improved? Is it that they will not admit
“ of more improvement; and that the
“ nature of man cannot be better governed?
“ By no means. The fault is in the agent,
“ not the subject. The errors of a prince,
“ lifted from the cradle or seraglio to the
“ throne, of a visier chosen merely from
“ favour,

“ favour, undo in one hour the work of an
 “ age, and require the wisdom of another
 “ to bring things back to their first state:
 “ and this it is that hath prevented polity
 “ from arriving at greater perfection.”

SECTION IV.

‘ YOU have shewn me, O son of Wisdom,’ said I, ‘ the error in which I have set out! Shew me also how to correct it.’

“ The wisdom of thy father,” returned the sage, “ hath sent thee forth into the world, with a mind well prepared by instruction to draw from experience that practical knowledge, which is necessary to conduct thee safely through life, and enable thee to fulfil the duties of it; but his fondness hath thrown obstacles in thy way, which if not timely removed, may disappoint his hopes.

“ Surrounded thus by a crowd of slaves, you see only with their eyes; and while they minister to unnecessary convenience, they debar you from that intercourse with other people, by which alone experience in their ways is to be acquired; and not by running from place to place,

“ viewing

“ viewing superficially the face of nature,
“ the works of art, and studied manners.

“ Before the wealthy, all men wear a
“ mask. His equals in wealth disguise
“ their sentiments under an appearance of
“ politeness; and shew only the bright
“ side of their country, from emulative
“ pride. The poor run into the opposite
“ extreme, vilifying their country to flat-
“ ter him by the comparison; and throw
“ the blame of their misery from them-
“ selves, in order to excite his compassion
“ and draw relief from his bounty.

“ To see the world properly, you must
“ enter into it. You must dismiss your
“ long train of attendants, lay aside your
“ purple robes, and mix with the multi-
“ tude without any mark of distinction to
“ put them on their guard. Thus only
“ can you learn their real sentiments, and
“ trace the motives of their actions.”

“ But is there no danger in doing this?
“ I returned, hurt at an injunction so hu-
“ miliating to the pride of condition, so
“ contrary to the course of life in which
“ I had been brought up. Is not a tra-
“ veller subject to many accidents and dis-
“ asters, which require care and assistance?

“ Are

Are there not menial offices, which a man
cannot so well perform for himself?"—

"And who performs them for thy
slave?" replied the sage. "Who spreads
a carpet for the pilgrim in the wilder-
ness? or guards the mariner from the
dangers of the sea?"

"But this is the vanity of man! Is thy
nature superior to theirs? And is not the
distinction between you merely acci-
"dental? Man wants not assistance to per-
"form, for himself, the very few offices
"which are really necessary for him! Nor
"is one state of life exposed to greater
"dangers than another. Be superior to
"this vain weakness. The power which
"protects and provides for every living
"thing, will not neglect you, while you
"deserve his care."

"The force of truth is irresistible. I
"was humbled in my own eyes; and hung
"down my head abashed before him.
"After a pause of a few moments, I threw
"myself at his feet, and embracing his
"knees, I see, I acknowledge my error,
"said I, and will correct it. I will go
"directly to Bagdat, and there sell all those
"slaves, of whose attendance thou hast
"shewn me the evil; happy if by this
"obedience

‘ obedience I may appear not unworthy of
‘ thy farther instruction ; to implore which,
‘ I will return to you.’

“ And why should’st thou sell them ? ”
he returned, raising me tenderly from
the ground. “ Why not restore them to
that liberty which is the common right
of all mankind ; tho’ so many are un-
justly deprived of it, that grown familiar,
and in a manner sanctified by use, the
injustice hath almost lost its native ap-
pearance, and passes for a right.” —

“ Are then all men equal ? ” said I,
amazed at what I heard. “ And have all
a right to the same stations in life ? ”

“ That all are equal in their nature,”
he replied, “ Reason will infallibly shew
you ; as it will also shew, that they have
an equal right to the same stations, if they
can arrive at them, by just means. But
as there is a subordination indispensibly
necessary for the purposes of life, so all
must remain in those stages of the
ascent, which have fallen to their first
lot, till they rise to higher, by their
own merit : and this, instead of being
an unjust partiality in the œconomy of
nature, is the best incentive, and reward
of virtuous emulation.”

“ His

‘ His words instantly dispelled the clouds of prejudice, in which my mind was involved, opening my heart, with delight, to sentiments, which vindicated human nature from such indignity. I set all my slaves at liberty; and was proceeding to divide among them the wealth, which my father had given me, to defray the expences of my journey: but Myrza restrained me.’

“ Hold,” said he. “ Prudence is a virtue, equally with generosity; and a man may be unjust to himself, no less than to another. Give them the means of supporting life, by honest industry, or the gift of liberty will be of little value to them. But make not yourself poor, to make them unnecessarily rich.

“ I perceive that the greatest part of the wealth, given to you by your father, consists in precious stones. Reserve these for yourself. They are light of carriage, and may be easily concealed. Poverty is subject to many inconveniences; and riches are a blessing, when rightly used. The time may come, when your’s may be necessary to you, if only to relieve the necessities of others. For your slaves, the equipage and implements of luxury, “ and

“ and the utensils of their own servitude,
“ for which you can have no farther use,
“ when you dismiss themselves, will be
“ sufficient, if they apply them properly!
“ If not; they will be too much.

“ Nor would I counsel you to dismiss
“ all your attendants indiscriminately; and
“ launch into the world absolutely alone:
“ You are yet too inexperienced in its ways,
“ for such an adventurous enterprize. Is
“ there not among them some one, whom
“ your father hath particularly recom-
“ mended to your confidence? I have
“ observed one, whose looks bespeak an
“ heart, honest in itself, and affectionate to
“ you, and whose years promise experience.
“ You have given him his liberty, in re-
“ turn for which he will give you his
“ friendship; and be the faithful com-
“ panion of your travels. So shall you
“ avoid the discomfort of journeying alone;
“ and enjoy in his conversation, a pleasure
“ more sublime, than you could possibly
“ receive from the attendance of a slave.”

“ These cares consuming the rest of the
“ day, I remained that night the guest of
“ Myrza, who, after we had closed the
“ evening, in the same manner as the pre-
“ ceding,

ceding, lodged me in one of the recesses
of his grotto.

It is impossible to express what I felt
on this occasion: My heart at first re-
volted against a change in my situation,
by which I fancied myself dishonoured.
But a moment's reflection restored me
to reason; and the thought of having
made my servants free and happy, com-
pensated well for the want of their
service.

SECTION V.

I WOULD have departed the next
morning; but Myrza insisted on my
tarrying with him for a few days, every
hour of which added to my knowledge,
as he always turned his conversation to
the subjects most instructive; and encou-
raged me to declare every doubt, which
opposed my assenting to his words.

The wisdom, which he shewed in
solving these doubts; and his sagacity in
frequently anticipating my declaration
of them, as if he saw into my very soul,
confirmed me so strongly in the opinion
propagated by fame, of his holding con-
verse with the spiritual beings, who
watch

“ watch over the actions of man, that I
“ could not forbear taking occasion, one
“ evening, as we sat on the bank of the
“ river discoursing on various subjects,
“ to ask him how it might be possible to
“ obtain the happiness of an intercourse
“ with them.

“ That there are spiritual beings, my
“ son,” said he; after a pause of some
“ minutes, as if to consider so difficult a
“ subject, “ which inhabit the several ele-
“ ments of which this world is composed,
“ as well as the earth is inhabited by man,
“ is an opinion, founded on such testimony
“ of the fact, and which hath so univer-
“ sally prevailed in every age, and coun-
“ try, that it were offering an affront to
“ the human mind to suppose it utterly
“ without foundation.

“ Nor doth its credit depend solely on
“ this invariable consent. Reason receives
“ it with reverence, as one of those sublime
“ probabilities, which though above its
“ power to prove, yet contradict none of
“ those tests, on which it rests the proof
“ of matters, incapable of direct demon-
“ stration.

“ The infinite variety of animated be-
“ ings, which we behold cover the face of
“ the

“ the earth, so as not to leave one atom of
“ it uninhabited, gives cause to conclude
“ that the other elements are peopled also
“ as fully, by beings to whose organs of
“ life they are adapted, though imper-
“ ceptible to the grosser senses of man; as
“ else there would be a void, an useless
“ part in the works of the Deity; a sup-
“ position contradicting the sacred, and
“ self-evident truth, that he doth nothing
“ in vain.

“ But though reason can thus rest itself
“ satisfied in the existence of such beings,
“ its researches into their nature and occu-
“ pation meet not with equal success;
“ Whether they are immortal, and were
“ all created at the same time? Or if not,
“ in what manner the species is continued;
“ and whether they are immaterial, or
“ only composed of matter more subtile
“ than the objects of human sense; being
“ questions, in the pathless, illimitable
“ contemplation of which, the mind wan-
“ ders at a loss, for any certain point,
“ whereon to rest belief.

“ As to their occupations, the same uni-
“ versal opinion, which agrees in their
“ existence, agrees also in assigning to
“ them the conduct of man’s actions,
“ which

“ which are supposed to be good or bad,
“ according to the nature of the spirit,
“ which directs them. But this opinion,
“ beside that it is unsupported by other
“ proof like the former, is attended with
“ great difficulties, and must for many
“ reasons be received with great, and most
“ cautious limitations.

“ If the actions of man are entirely
“ directed by such beings, what becomes
“ of his free-agency, on which alone can
“ depend the merit, or demerit of those
“ actions? And are not those beings justly
“ chargeable with them, not he?

“ But this difficulty, and many others
“ attending this opinion, which are so evi-
“ dent that it is unnecessary to repeat
“ them, will vanish, if instead of assigning
“ to those beings the direction of man's
“ actions, we suppose them employed
“ in his protection from the many dangers
“ incident to his nature, and in which
“ his passions every moment entangle him.
“ An occupation, by its benevolence better
“ suited to a being of a superior nature.

SECTION VI.

“ IN respect to what you mentioned of “an intercourse between man and these “beings, that also is a question, attended “with many difficulties, and to be most “cautiously received.”

“ How! I exclaimed, astonished and disappointed at what I heard. Is not the ‘testimony of so many wise, and holy ‘men, who assert their having both seen, ‘and heard them, a sufficient proof of this ‘intercourse?—”

“ I deny not the reality of the inter-“course,” replied the sage. “ I only am “in doubt concerning the manner of it; “whether perceptibly to the senses, or only “in the power of imagination.

“ If they are immaterial, how can they “have a form to be seen? How can they “emit a voice to be heard? If they are “material, how can they appear instantly “close to a man, without any appearance “of gradual approach? How can they “melt into air, and disappear totally, in “an instant, without gradual departure? “And is it not more consonant to reason “to suppose, that being *mind* themselves, “they

“ they hold intercourse only with the
“ mind, and are reflected upon the senses,
“ by the power of imagination, in the
“ same manner as objects in a dream. A
“ supposition, on which that testimony
“ may possibly be found to depend chiefly
“ for credit; so many absurdities and
“ contradictions being supported by it,
“ equally with the most important truths;
“ that without this method of accounting
“ for the deception of the testifier, the
“ mind would reject the latter, because
“ of the former.

“ Not that this supposition is unattended
“ with difficulties either. Such a manner
“ of conversing is certainly above our
“ comprehension; but then it contradicts
“ not reason; and if we refuse assent to
“ every thing, which we cannot clearly
“ comprehend, our knowledge will be
“ reduced within very narrow limits. I
“ know that my hand moves in obedience
“ to my will; but I know not how my will
“ operates upon my hand to effect that
“ motion. We deceive ourselves with
“ vain words. Our boasted knowledge
“ extends only to facts; but the manner,
“ in which these are effected, is hidden
“ from us.”

“ But

‘But doth not the admission of this possibility of deception,’ I returned, ‘at the same time weaken, if not over-turn all historic faith, which depends entirely upon testimony?’

“Not in the least,” replied the sage, ‘Testimony is certainly sufficient proof of facts, which run in the regular course of nature. But where this is deviated from, too much caution can not be taken in examining the end of that deviation; and the competency of the testimony, by which it is supported.

“When you tell me, that the city of Byrsa was founded by Narbal, on the destruction of Carthage by the Romans, I hesitate not a moment to give credit to your words; because people who lived at the same time, and therefore may be justly supposed to have been acquainted with the fact, have left written memorials, which have been handed down regularly from them to us, that there was such a city as Carthage; and that it was destroyed by a people called Romans—because there is nothing out of the common course of things, in such a destruction; or in a prince’s flying from the conquerors, with a num-

“ ber of the citizens, and founding a state
“ in another country; and because you
“ have sufficient ability, and may have
“ had sufficient opportunity to trace the
“ state, in which you were born, to its
“ origin; and can have no sufficient reason
“ to attempt imposing a falsehood upon
“ my credulity.

“ But should you tell me, that the
“ flight of Narbal was in consequence of
“ a spirit's having appeared to him; and
“ commanded him to leave his own country
“ try, and go to that where he founded
“ his state, I might receive the relation
“ with respect, because of the virtue of the
“ relator, and the importance of the end
“ proposed by such appearance; but no
“ without a doubt, when I balance against
“ his testimony the possibility of its being
“ only in the power of imagination, and
“ the irregularity of the fact, in the common
“ course of nature; and also, because
“ it may have been feigned by him to
“ promote an expedition, on which he
“ was intent, and doubted the sufficiency
“ of his own influence to carry into execu-
“ tion, without the assistance of such
“ an authority.

“ Bu

“ But should you add, that on his arrival at that place, the stones and trees instantly formed themselves into a city for the reception of his people, to save them the delay and labour of building, I should directly reject the whole, as a fiction devised since his time, for the purpose of imposition.

“ Nor is there any danger of this principle’s breaking the vigour of the mind, “ by inducing a general doubt, if it is not “ applied beyond its proper limits.

“ Credulity, and scepticism are the extremitieſ of a line, in the middle of which true knowledge is placed.

“ By believing indiscriminately, the mind “ lies open to receive the grosseſt, and “ most dangerous errors; by indiscriminate “ doubt, to reject the most important “ truths. To find the mean, between “ these, is the business of reason, which “ it ſeldom fails in, when permitted to “ ſeek for it, without prejudice.

“ I have ſaid, that if we deny every “ thing, which we do not clearly comprehend, our knowledge will be reduced “ within very narrow bounds! Perhaps “ these bounds are already narrower, than “ we are well aware.

H 3

“ I know

“ I know that I exist, because I perceive
“ the operations of my mind. I know
“ that I derive not my existence from my-
“ self, because I know not how I came to
“ exist. I therefore know that another
“ being, from whom I derive my existence,
“ must also exist; and I know that this
“ being must exist necessarily, without
“ deriving existence from any other, be-
“ cause an endless succession is impossible:
“ And lastly, I know, that as all other
“ beings derive their existence from this
“ being, so they can exist only by him;
“ and therefore that it is their duty to
“ obey those laws, which he hath thought
“ proper to prescribe to them: but farther
“ than this, I know nothing.

“ And with this portion of knowledge,
“ I am humbly and gratefully content;
“ nor will I misapply the gift, by attempt-
“ ing to pry farther, satisfied that, little
“ as it may appear, it is amply sufficient
“ to conduct me in safety, through the
“ dangers of this life, to the happiness of
“ the next.”

‘ Though the pleasure, I found in the
‘ conversation of Myrza, encreased every
‘ hour, with the increase of knowledge,
‘ which I derived from it, I forgot not
‘ myself

myself so far, as to engross too much of that time, which should be a common benefit to all mankind. At the end of fifteen days, I departed from him, and committing myself with humble resignation to the guidance of heaven, resumed my travels, in company with the friend whom he had selected for me.

SECTION VII.

THE sun had but just begun to gild the firmament, with the first beams of day, when I left the grotto of Myrza. The sound of his voice was still in my ears. I exulted in the proficiency I had made under his instructions; and thought myself superior to every incident of life.

But I had not proceeded far, before this confidence began to cool. I soon felt the fatigue of travelling, in a manner to which I was unaccustomed; and the thought of my being alone, for with a single companion I esteemed myself little better, awoke sensations, in no respect pleasing. I started in affright; and blushed at my own weakness! I reasoned against it; but it eluded my reasons. At length,

‘ I compounded the contest. I resolved to
 ‘ continue my journey to Bagdat; and if I
 ‘ should find the inconveniencies over-
 ‘ balance the advantage, to provide new
 ‘ attendants there.

‘ But my fellow traveller, and friend,
 ‘ saved me from such a weakness. He
 ‘ perceived my uneasiness, and was alarmed
 ‘ for my health; by limiting his enquiries
 ‘ to which he persuaded me that he had
 ‘ not discovered my disorder to be in my
 ‘ mind, and rouzed the spirit of pride to
 ‘ conceal my shame.

‘ This employed my thoughts, till the
 ‘ cause of my uneasiness became familiar to
 ‘ me, when it totally vanished; and I only
 ‘ wondered that I had been uneasy.

‘ On the third day of our journey we
 ‘ joined a numerous caravan of merchants,
 ‘ who had pitched their tents on the bank
 ‘ of the river, to avoid the heat of the
 ‘ sun, which had now mounted high in the
 ‘ heavens.

‘ The habits of Faquires, which we had
 ‘ assumed by the advice of Myrza, gained
 ‘ us immediate admission into their com-
 ‘ pany, where I was instantly struck with
 ‘ the openness of their behaviour, which
 ‘ seemed

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‘ seemed to flow directly from nature,
‘ without design or reserve.

‘ This was entirely new to me. “ I
“ revere thy wisdom, sage Myrza,” said I
‘ to myself! “ I now see life, in its genuine
“ colours! How happy am I at being
“ freed from the croud of attendants, who
“ have hitherto stood between me and
“ mankind!”

‘ But this happiness did not continue long
‘ unclouded. They were going to eat;
‘ and desired me to taste a morsel of
‘ bread with them. I sat down accord-
‘ ingly; but started to see a slave seat
‘ himself next to me; and my heart re-
‘ volted at my being obliged to fetch water
‘ from the river for myself to drink.

‘ A very little use, however, reconciled
‘ me also to this debasement, as I at first
‘ thought it, better than all the instructions
‘ of Myrza had been able to do; and con-
‘ vinced me of the vanity of that wisdom
‘ which is acquired only by instruction.

‘ On being informed that the caravan
‘ journied to Bagdat, I desired permission
‘ to continue with them; which was rea-
‘ dily granted to me; and I resolved to
‘ begin the practice of Myrza’s precepts.
‘ I accordingly observed with the strictest

‘ attention every thing I saw and heard;
‘ and the doubts of one day were generally
‘ solved by the next, without my asking
‘ any solution of them.

‘ This conduct soon gained me the
‘ respect and confidence of the whole com-
‘ pany. I was esteemed wise, because I
‘ betrayed not my ignorance by asking in-
‘ formation: And every one was eager to
‘ communicate his secrets to me, because I
‘ never enquired into them; there being
‘ nothing which so effectually counteracts
‘ curiosity as the discovery of it.

‘ The scenes, which this confidence
‘ opened to me, would have amply over-
‘ paid my silence, had it been never so
‘ contrary to my temper. I now saw
‘ things, in colours the most different from
‘ those, in which they had appeared to
‘ me, at my first joining the caravan; and
‘ found that the same passions rule the
‘ human heart, in every state of life; even
‘ the coarse jest, the loud laugh of merri-
‘ ment, those reputed characteristics of
‘ vulgar happiness, I could too often trace
‘ to motives the most unhappy; and see
‘ them joined in and enjoyed only in pro-
‘ portion to the malignancy of the allusion.

‘ This

‘ This general confidence though was
‘ not unattended by its inconveniencies.
‘ Every one, who told me his secrets,
‘ taking my silence for approbation, ex-
‘ pected that I should enter into his views;
‘ and was continually obtruding upon me
‘ his schemes for their accomplishment, in
‘ which he thought himself entitled to my
‘ assistance, so far as to look upon my
‘ holding the common intercourse of hu-
‘ manity with his adversary as an act of
‘ treachery to him: A situation too em-
‘ barrassing to have been long supported.

‘ One evening, as I was ruminating upon
‘ these inconsistencies, and considering how
‘ I should disentangle myself from the con-
‘ sequences of them, one of the principal
‘ merchants in the caravan accosting me in
‘ a friendly manner;

“ Hassan,” said he, (for I had changed
“ my own name of Himilco, for this, to
“ avoid being traced by any of my late
“ attendants) “ I have observed your de-
“ meanor, ever since you have come
“ among us; and see that your wisdom
“ exceeds your age. I have therefore re-
“ solved to make a proposal to you, which
“ will give you the strongest proof of my
“ esteem.

“ You

“ You have been informed that this
“ caravan journeys to Bagdat. It is not
“ my intention to accompany it so far.
“ I shall turn off to-morrow evening to the
“ country of Farsistan, whither some mat-
“ ters of importance call me ; after I shall
“ have executed which, I propose conti-
“ nuing my travels, through that once
“ flourishing country, to the regions, whose
“ happy people are first blessed with the
“ sight of the sun, on his emerging from
“ the ocean, to enlighten the world.

“ From your habit, I judge, that the
“ motive of your travelling is to acquire
“ knowledge. If so ! this is the path
“ which leads directly to it. The sages
“ of antiquity never thought their thirst
“ for wisdom satisfied, till they came, and
“ drank at this fountain head.

“ If you chuse to accompany me, in
“ this journey, we will drink out of the
“ same cup, as brothers. My people are
“ sufficient in number to defend us from
“ the dangers of the way ; and the profit,
“ which I shall gain by my merchandize,
“ will enable me to make provision for the
“ wants of both our future lives. I shall
“ not attempt to influence your compliance
“ by any arguments of persuasion. You

“ best

“ best know the motives which ought to
“ direct your conduct, and will be guided
“ by them.”

‘ It is impossible to express the emotions which I felt at this proposal. I had long had the strongest desire to see the countries whither he was going; but then the length of the way must detain me much beyond the time prescribed by my father for my return.

‘ The difficulty was most distressing. But after revolving various schemes, I at length thought of one, which appeared to reconcile my duty to my inclination. I resolved to send back my companion to my father, in order to inform him of my intended journey; and obviate his apprehensions at my protracted absence.

‘ The merchant approving of this design, I proceeded immediately to put it in execution. The parting between my friend and me was most tender. Gratitude for the restitution of his liberty had exalted his attachment to me into the warmest affection. He embraced my knees, he besought me, with many tears, to let him accompany me, in my long, and perilous journey; and send some other in his place.

“ Who

“Who will serve you, in the day?
 “Who will watch over you, in the night?”
 “said he wringing his hands in anguish of
 soul. “You are not sufficiently inured to
 “hardship! Your years are too few;
 “your strength is unequal to the fatigues
 “into which you are plunging! Should
 “sickness or disaster befall you, who is to
 “administer relief?”—

“That power, I answered, in the words
 of Myrza, whose goodness is the support
 of all his works; or human care and relief
 would be in vain. A support, in which
 the piety of my father will think me safe.
 Not that I am insensible to your affection.
 I would gladly send another, but you
 know it is not in my power. Of all,
 whom I might have sent, you only remain
 with me; nor would my father give the
 same credit to the words of any, as he
 will to yours!”

He saw that it was in vain to urge me
 farther, and would not distress me, with
 fruitless solicitation.

My mind was so full of the gratifica-
 tion, I promised to my curiosity, in this
 journey, that I never attended to the
 circumstances in which I undertook it.
 Circumstances in reality much more ter-

rifying

rifying than those which had lately struck
me with so many terrors. I then had an
experienced, a careful, and an affectionate
friend with me. I had now implicitly
entrusted myself to the faith of a people,
who were in a great measure strangers
to me. But it was too late to look back.

SECTION VIII.

ON our entering the empire of Far-sistan I was struck with horror, to behold
the desolation and havoc which deformed
the face of a country made so beautiful
by the hand of nature. The lands were
uncultivated! the cities lay in ruins! and
the few wretched people, destitute of
every comfort, and almost of every ne-
cessary of life, wandered from place to
place, to seek the precarious subsistence
of the day.

But this universal misery affected me
not more than the advantage taken of it
by the merchant, who exacted the higher
prices for his commodities, the greater
he saw necessity for them; aggravating
public calamities, by turning them to
private gain.

Nor

‘ Nor was my abhorrence of such sordid inhumanity greater than my surprize, when I compared it with his conduct on other occasions. For though the habit of taking advantage in his dealing had gained so strong possession of his heart, that he could not refrain from it on any consideration of circumstances; in every other instance he was generous and humane; and would readily bestow upon the same person of whose necessities he had taken such cruel advantage, more than he had exacted from him; as, should he come the next moment to pursue any thing else, he could not avoid repeating his exaction of the very money which he had just before given him in charity; and would give him again, if requested, from the same motive.

‘ Our journey through the territories of Farsistan afforded no incident worthy of relation. The country continued to exhibit one scene of desolation, more painful to the view than the barren desert; the traces of former prosperity aggravating the contemplation of present misery.

‘ My fellow traveller saw what I felt, and endeavoured to divert my thoughts to more pleasing objects. “ When we

“ shall

“ shall have passed the great river of Indus,”
“ said he, “ the sight of that country will
“ amply compensate for these disagreeable
“ scenes. Industry there flourishes in the
“ smiles of freedom. Commerce is en-
“ couraged in all its various branches. An
“ universal plenty covers the land; and
“ the people are numerous, healthy, and
“ happy.

“ Nor less so were the people of this
“ country once; till ambition overturned
“ the works of art, and marred the bles-
“ sungs of nature. The magnificence of
“ the ruins, which still remain, sufficiently
“ prove its former happiness. But among
“ slaves nothing can flourish. Heaven!
“ that a lust of rule should tempt a man to
“ make his own species miserable.”

‘ Cease!’ interrupted Temugin, ‘ nor
‘ waste time in repeating the words of a
‘ fool! The monuments of magnificence,
‘ which he instanced as proofs of the free-
‘ dom and happiness of a people, prove
‘ only their slavery. Were they not the
‘ works of compulsion, raised merely to
‘ gratify the vanity of the rulers, without
‘ regard to the miseries of the people em-
‘ ployed in raising them, to whom they
‘ could be of no advantage? Men who
‘ are

‘ are free, labour only for themselves;
 ‘ for their own respective use and conveni-
 ‘ ence; nor are such monuments of tyran-
 ‘ nic ostentation ever raised among them.
 ‘ But such are the dreams of idle specula-
 ‘ tion.—Proceed.’

SECTION IX.

‘ THE appearance of the country, after
 ‘ we had passed the great river,’ resumed
 the captive, ‘ supported not the represen-
 ‘ tations of the merchant. He started;
 ‘ and looking around him with astonish-
 ‘ ment and grief, “ Whence can this pro-
 “ ceed,” he exclaimed; “ this melancholy
 “ change? An hundred moons are scarce
 “ elapsed, since I was here last. All things
 “ then wore a different aspect. The wrath
 “ of heaven must have fallen, in famine
 “ or pestilence, upon the land.”

‘ While he was preparing to exhibit his
 ‘ merchandize for traffic, in the first city
 ‘ at which we arrived, I walked forth, as
 ‘ was my custom, to view the place, and
 ‘ observe the manners of the people. But
 ‘ what was my surprize at my return to
 ‘ the caravanera in the evening, not to
 ‘ find any trace of him!

‘ The

‘ The admonition of my father, that moment recurred to my mind. I resolved to wait for information, from accident, without making any enquiries, for fear of involving myself in whatever misfortune had happened to him.

‘ Accordingly, I seated myself among other strangers, in the gate; where my habit of a Faquir attracting the notice of a Bramin, who was passing by, he kindly invited me to taste a morsel of food, and sleep under his roof that night.

‘ When we had finished our repast, “ The composure in which you sat,” said the Bramin, “ persuades me that you were unacquainted with what had happened in that caravansera but a few hours before.

“ A respectable merchant, who had trafficked in this unhappy country for many years, without committing injustice, or suffering injury, being a stranger to the tyranny under which we groan at present, had no sooner begun to expose his commodities to sale, this morning, as usual, than he was seized by a set of rapacious intruders, who abusing the false policy, by which they were at first admitted into our country, have fastened

“ themselves

“ themselves upon us, and now prey upon
“ our vitals.

“ In vain did the honest man desire to
“ know the reason of such an outrage ; in
“ vain did he call upon heaven and earth
“ for justice ! He was dragged away,
“ before a tribunal, where his accusers
“ were his judges ; who aggravating their
“ iniquity, by a mockery of the forms of
“ law, confiscated all his merchandize to
“ their own use, and threw himself into a
“ loathsome prison, for having presumed
“ to attempt trafficking in this country
“ without their permission.

“ I see you are astonished at such a
“ violation of every principle of justice.
“ I will therefore unfold the rise of this
“ usurpation to you. The hour of rest is
“ yet sufficiently distant, and the recital
“ worthy of your attention ; as happily it
“ may enable you to put your own country
“ on its guard against a like misfortune.”

End of the THIRD Book.

THE
HISTORY
OF
ARSACES,
PRINCE OF BETLIS.

BOOK THE FOURTH.

SECTION I.

“THE difference in the produce of
“the different parts of the world,”
“continued the Bramin, “hath been justly
“ascribed to a beneficent design in the
“Creator, to raise a friendly intercourse
“between the inhabitants, by laying them
“under a necessity of applying to each
“other for the mutual supply of their
“wants.

“In

“ In such an intercourse, this country, of
“ all under heaven, should naturally seem
“ entitled to the pre-eminence, as having
“ not only every necessary, but also every
“ convenience, and unhappily, almost every
“ luxury of life within itself.

“ But alas! it is the use which conse-
“ crates the blessing. This very plenty is
“ made to disappoint the end for which it
“ was given. It blunts the relish of en-
“ joyment; and deprives the body of
“ strength and the mind of vigour, by
“ taking away the necessity of care and
“ labour. Wanting nothing, we wish not,
“ we strive not for any thing; but sit in
“ indolent expectation of that which we
“ know the revolving season will bring to
“ us, till we become an easy prey to those,
“ whose fortunately less favourable clime
“ and soil oblige them to struggle with
“ difficulties, and brave dangers, in order
“ to procure elsewhere, those things which
“ Nature has denied to them at home.

“ Some years since, a company of these
“ prowlers, who had wandered across the
“ great ocean, from the remotest regions
“ of the West, landed upon our coasts, in
“ want and wretchedness. The hardiness
“ of such an undertaking struck us. We
“ received

“ received them with humanity. We
“ relieved their necessities; and gave them
“ the good things of our land, in exchange
“ for trifles, whose only value arose from
“ their novelty.

“ Nor did we stop there. Engaged by
“ the artifices, and respecting the un-
“ daunted spirits of those our new ac-
“ quaintances, we permitted them to erect
“ habitations on our coasts, to which they
“ might bring their merchandizes in future
“ times; and from this ill-judged hospita-
“ lity have proceeded all the miseries which
“ at present overwhelm our country, and
“ will probably bring it to utter ruin in the
“ end.

“ The accounts which these adventurers
“ gave of our wealth, and easiness to part
“ with it, at their return home, encouraged
“ others to make the same adventure.
“ They came in such numbers as should
“ have alarmed a just suspicion of their
“ design. They fortified their habitations,
“ under pretext of defence against injuries
“ never intended them; but in reality to
“ secure their depredations, and over-awe
“ our sovereigns, whom they forced to
“ enter into treaty with them on terms of
“ equality.

“ Since

“ Since that time, their conduct hath
“ been a continued series of the most atro-
“ cious crimes. Hardier in their nature,
“ they take advantage of our pusillanimity
“ and weakness; and unrestrained by those
“ obligations, which are the safeguards of
“ society, the assurance of justice and peace,
“ they break through every thing which
“ would oppose their will; and laugh at
“ our credulity, for having thought them
“ capable of good faith.

“ They grind the faces of the poor.
“ The husbandman dares not to taste the
“ fruits of his own labour; the artificer to
“ sell the work of his hands, without their
“ permission; a permission for which they
“ make the wretches pay so dearly, that all
“ industry is discouraged, and the blessings
“ of nature turned into the severest curse,
“ by being thus withheld from them, tho'
“ within their reach.

“ Nor are their outrages confined to
“ the poor. They make our princes pass
“ under harrows of iron; and lead our
“ kings into captivity to extort their wealth
“ from them. How long Heaven, in its
“ wrath, will suffer them to continue this
“ flagitious course, I presume not to di-
“ vine. But this is evident; that if there
“ is

“ is not a sudden stop put to their ravages,
“ this country will be reduced to the same
“ state of desolation with its unhappy neigh-
“ bour, Farsistan.”

SECTION II.

‘ WHEN I was preparing to depart,
‘ the next morning, my host asked me,
‘ how long I intended to remain in that
‘ city; and with an air of benevolence,
‘ offered me every service in his power.
‘ As I never interfere with the concerns of
‘ any man,” said he, “ I flatter myself,
“ that I am beloved by the people of my
“ own nation. Nor am I persecuted by
“ the strangers, because my profession is a
“ pledge for my poverty. On the con-
“ trary, they affect to shew me kindness,
“ in order to lighten the charge of their
“ treating all the natives with indiscrimi-
“ nate cruelty.”

‘ His saying this, struck me with the
‘ thought of soliciting his intercession for
‘ my unfortunate fellow-traveller. It was
‘ possible he might be able to serve him;
‘ and the attempt was a duty superior to
‘ those prudential motives, upon which the
‘ admonition of my father, against inter-

‘fering in the concerns of another, was
‘founded.

‘I should be undeserving of your service,
‘I answered, O venerable father, could I
‘hesitate a moment to accept the offer of
‘it, in an instance which will over-pay to
‘your benevolent heart any trouble it may
‘give you.

‘I left my native country to travel in
‘search of knowledge, and came to this
‘city in company with the unhappy mer-
‘chant, whose misfortune you related to
‘me yester-evening. If you can procure
‘his release from prison, that will be the
‘highest service which can be done to me
‘in this place. As for his wealth! let
‘that remain with the spoilers! his liberty
‘is all I ask.’

‘This was the first time the Bramin had
‘heard the sound of my voice. He fixed
‘his eyes stedfastly upon me, while I was
‘speaking, and as soon as I had ended,
‘I equally respect the motive of your tra-
“velling,” he answered, “and the ad-
“vances you have made in the attainment
“of it. Wisdom only could have main-
“tained silence, on so interesting an occa-
“sion, till a reason of such weight made it
“necessary for you to speak.

“But,

“ But, O my son! you over-rate my consequence with these people. They are civil to me, only because I require not any thing from them. But though I may not be able of myself to accomplish your beneficent purpose, I may possibly find the means of enabling you to effect it: and Heaven this moment inspires the lucky thought.

“ The stranger, who rules in this city, has a desire to inform himself in the affairs of all the neighbouring nations; and spoke to me, not long since, to seek a person capable of giving him this information. If you, therefore, can speak the language of his country, for he knoweth not any other, and will undertake so irksome a task, I will this day lead you to him; and Heaven may give you an opportunity of serving your friend, in some favourable moment of that intercourse, which such an occupation must necessarily give you with him.”

“ I was involved in the greatest perplexity by this proposal. To embrace it must put a stop to my travels, which was contrary to my firmest resolution, as the time drew near, when I had promised to return to my father. If I rejected it, I

‘ gave up the hope of delivering an honest
‘ man from unjust oppression and misery.
‘ The choice was distressing; but I hesi-
‘ tated not long.

‘ I have some little knowledge, I an-
‘ swered, O my father, in the language
‘ you mention. I learned it from this un-
‘ happy man; and can never apply it to a
‘ better purpose, than to serve him in his
‘ present distress. The task, it is true,
‘ will interrupt my travels; but it will at
‘ the same time bring me nearer to the end
‘ of them. In the practice of virtue consists
‘ the only true wisdom.

‘ The Bramin applauded my resolution.
‘ We went directly to the habitation of the
‘ ruler; in whose anti-chamber we were
‘ obliged to wait a considerable time, be-
‘ fore we could be admitted to the honour
‘ of his presence.

SECTION III.

‘ I had seen something in my native
‘ country of the slavery of such attend-
‘ ances; but never had I formed any con-
‘ ception of such a scene as I was now in.
‘ Every passion which could agitate, every
‘ vice which could deform the heart of
‘ man,

'man, was painted in the various faces
'round me; while suspicion, deceit, envy,
'cruelty, and avarice dictated every word
'they spoke to each other.

'Figure to yourself a set of men, thrown
'together by the incidents of an indigent
'life, from every class of mankind, and
'every country under heaven, acting, or
'rather preposterously attempting to act,
'the most important parts, and you will
'have some notion of the company in which
'I was: a company, to whose characters
'the powers of description are so unequal,
'that nothing but the indisputable proof
'of facts could make them pass for other
'than mere creatures of imagination.

'My soul sickened at the sight; and I
'was almost driven to give up my purpose,
'and depart, for fear of being infected by
'such society, when the Bramin and I
'were summoned to our audience.

'We found the great man iolling on a
'sopha, in all the mimickry of state; his
'awkward uneasiness under which, shewed
'his inexperience in the reality. All was
'bustle, hurry, and confusion. His orders
'contradicted each other, every moment.
'He knew not what he ought to approve,
'and therefore placed his judgment in

‘ finding fault ; as he shewed his greatness
 ‘ by looking with contempt at every thing
 ‘ around him.

‘ Our entrance was announced to his
 ‘ excellency, by a servant, on a bent
 ‘ knee ; but though he was at that very
 ‘ instant looking at us, he continued to
 ‘ adjust his dress, for some time, before he
 ‘ condescended to honour us with the least
 ‘ notice ; till at length, throwing his eye
 ‘ toward us as by chance, he superciliously
 ‘ asked the Bramin the occasion of his visit.

“ Son of good fortune ! ” answered the
 ‘ Bramin, “ I have found such a person, as
 “ you desired me to seek for you, the last
 “ time I had the honour of paying my duty
 “ to your greatness ; and have brought
 “ him to receive your commands.”

‘ His excellency, rolling his eye back
 ‘ and forward from the Bramin to me,
 ‘ for some moments, with a suspicious
 ‘ stare, at length demanded to know,
 ‘ what person he meant.

“ A person,” answered the Bramin,
 “ who hath travelled through all the
 “ neighbouring nations, and is acquainted
 “ with their customs and manners, in
 “ which you expressed a desire to be in-
 “ structed.”

“ Not

“ Not I indeed ! ” replied his excellency, “ with a look and accent of offended importance. “ You quite misunderstood me. “ I want no instruction in such matters. “ What I spoke to you about, was a secretary for foreign affairs, who understands “ the languages of those countries, and “ can write my orders to the sovereigns of “ them ; as I have not time to throw “ away on learning their jargon myself. “ I regard not their customs ; and will “ teach them good manners, if they “ misbehave themselves to me.”

“ The mistake,” returned the Brâmin, “ is not material. My friend is qualified “ for either office. His capacity will be “ found on trial ; and I will vouch for his “ fidelity.”

“ Such a recommendation had the necessary weight with his excellency, who ‘ knew the integrity of the Brâmin, and ‘ had kept his eye fixed upon me, all the ‘ time he spoke, as if he would read my ‘ soul. He graciously nodded his assent, ‘ and saying that I might come, as soon as ‘ I pleased, my conductor and I withdrew, ‘ rejoiced at the happy omen of having so ‘ easily succeeded in the first part of our ‘ design.

SECTION IV.

ON our return to the habitation of the Bramin, "As you are now entering into a scene of life," said he, "utterly new to you, it may not be unnecessary to give you a sketch of the character of the man to whom you are going, in order to direct your conduct toward him.

The manner, in which he bears his present elevation, shews that it is not natural to him. But you must not form your judgment of him, in other respects, from thence; few men exhibiting a stronger proof, that superior talents are far from being the sole property of the superior ranks of life.

Born in the lowest class of mankind, and bred to one of the meanest professions, by which industrious poverty strives to earn a scanty subsistence, he has raised himself by the mere force of his own genius, to his present height of affluence and power; a rise, it is true, to which his principles have contributed little less than his abilities, as they never restrained him from any thing by which he could propose advantage: A qualifi-
cation

“cation common to almost all the men,
“ who have been honoured by the world,
“ with the name of *Great*.

“ It is but justice though to acknowledge that the actions by which he has thus raised himself, have, in their first effect, merited from his superiors (for even he, high as he holds himself here, is no more than the servant of subjects in his native country) all the rewards, which they have bestowed upon him.

“ But if we strip those actions of the blazonry of success, and measure them by the rules of public, as well as private virtue, we shall find, that by blackening ambition with perfidy, corrupting private fidelity, and staining victory with murder, he has exceeded in the most nefarious iniquity all the ravagers of the earth, who have built their greatness upon the miseries of mankind; as the consequence will prove, that instead of giving sanction to such crimes, by loading him with honours, his superiors should have punished him with the most ignominious death, to have given permanency to the very advantages he has acquired for them; the divine vengeance, though hitherto suspended, being now

“ ready to burst in thunder on their heads
“ for this injustice.

“ His associates, emulous of his success
“ in amassing wealth, but incapable of
“ effecting it, as he had, by actions at the
“ same time serviceable to their superiors,
“ have imitated him in the most flagitious
“ parts of his conduct, and laid the axe to
“ the root of the advantages which they
“ drew from this country, by robbing the
“ wretched natives of the means of sup-
“ plying it; for who will work, when he
“ knows that the fruit of his labour will be
“ ravished from him?

“ Of this, indeed, they seem to be sen-
“ sible themselves. But instead of being
“ moved by that sense to change their
“ measures, they have only changed the
“ object of them.

“ Seeing that the ruined land can no
“ longer supply matter for their rapacity,
“ they have turned it against their su-
“ priors, whom they have brought to the
“ verge of equal ruin, by a peculation of
“ the wealth entrusted to their care; la-
“ vishing it in erecting fortresses to guard
“ against impossible assaults; and main-
“ taining forces to fight against enemies
“ who do not exist, that they may have

“ an

“ an opportunity of appointing each other
“ to all the lucrative employments which
“ attend armies, and make war at present,
“ little less ruinous to the victors, than to
“ the vanquished.

“ Thus one is to supply materials, another to superintend the building; this to provide food, that cloathing for the men; and so on, arms, ammunition, every article possible to be wanted by an army, for all which, as they are to pay themselves, they contract in the greatest quantities, and at the highest rates, which mutual connivance can venture to impose upon common sense; at the same time, that not one of them hath the remotest intention of fulfilling such contracts, either in the quantity, or quality of the things to be provided; but suffer the miserable bands of robbers, which they call armies, to struggle with all the severities of climates not natural to them, and the want of every convenience, and almost necessary of life, if they cannot plunder them from the defenceless, and therefore more miserable natives: Iniquities, which however glaring, they practise without fear of punishment; the wealth, they acquire “ by

“ by them, enabling them to laugh at
“ justice, and hold the laws in defiance,
“ in their own country, whither they re-
“ turn to enjoy it; and make room for
“ another hungry set to pursue their steps.

“ This faithful representation will prove
“ the truth of what I have said before,
“ that if a sudden stop be not put to these
“ ravagers, our country must be ruined.
“ In fact, they will soon be forced to stop
“ of necessity. Their iniquity hath un-
“ dermined itself; and heaven, by a signal
“ instance of its justice, hath made them
“ avenge our wrongs upon their own heads.
“ Whether we may be able to survive the
“ shock, and enjoy the fruits of that venge-
“ ance though, is more than I can foresee;
“ so deep are the wounds, with which
“ they have pierced our hearts.”

SECTION V.

‘ ON my repairing next morning to the
‘ pavillion of the chief, I found him in
‘ conversation with a few of his associates,
‘ on some subject which seemed to embar-
‘ rass them not a little.

‘ As soon as he cast his eyes upon me,
‘ he turned short to the others, and told
‘ them,

‘them, with an exulting look, that I
‘could give them the information they
‘wanted, having travelled lately through
‘all those countries.

‘One of his associates having presumed
‘to express some doubt, whether it was
‘safe to entrust a stranger with a matter of
‘such moment, the sagacity of the chief
‘took instant offence. He asked, with a
‘supercilious air, “When he had been
“known to be mistaken in any man?”
‘Adding, that he had taken me for his
‘secretary, on the recommendation of a
‘man of honour: not that I wanted any
‘better voucher, to a man of discernment,
‘than the honesty written in my coun-
‘tance.

‘The other believing, or at least not
‘thinking it proper to disagree with him,
‘asked me if there was not a prospect of
‘the greatest plenty, in those countries, at
‘the approaching harvest; and on my
‘bowing in affirmation, added a number
‘of questions, concerning the prices of
‘the different necessaries of life in different
‘places.

‘It instantly occurred to me, that this
‘was such an opportunity as I sought, to
‘serve my fellow-traveller. I answered,
‘therefore,

‘ therefore, that these were matters with
‘ which I was utterly unacquainted, hav-
‘ ing never bought any thing but what
‘ was immediately necessary for my own
‘ use, the purpose of my travelling having
‘ been only to indulge curiosity, and ac-
‘ quire knowledge: but that I knew a
‘ person who had followed the profession
‘ of a merchant for many years, and was
‘ able to give him every information he
‘ could wish, in every branch of commerce;
‘ and on informing him whom I meant,
‘ gave so high a character of the merchant’s
‘ judgment and probity, that they all
‘ seemed inclined to employ him.

‘ But there was a difficulty in my way,
‘ which I plainly perceived would defeat
‘ my design, if it could not be removed.
‘ This was his merchandize, which they
‘ had seized, and thought he would ex-
‘ pect to have restored to him, before he
‘ would enter into their service: a sacri-
‘ fice to justice which they could not pre-
‘ vail upon themselves to make, to any
‘ uncertain prospect.

‘ On their expressing doubts, therefore,
‘ of the danger of placing confidence in a
‘ man utterly unknown to them, I replied,
‘ that they had a security for his honesty

‘ in

‘ in their own hands: that they might retain his merchandize till he should execute their commission; and then return it, or not, as he should deserve; by which means they would make it his interest to be honest to them.

‘ This thought settled the whole affair. The chief instantly approved of my proposal, paying a compliment to my judgment, in making interest the best motive to honesty; and I was directly sent to conduct the merchant to them.

SECTION VI.

‘ I cannot express what I felt, on entering the dungeon where the unhappy man was confined, even without any charge of a real crime. Dark, damp, and noisome, it seemed to have been designed to render the horrors of imprisonment still more horrible.

‘ In the indignation of my soul at such tyranny, I could not forbear exclaiming in my native language, “ What a proach is it to human nature, that the men, who have themselves been subject to the heavy hand of power, are the “ least

“ least proper to be entrusted with it over
“ others!”

‘ As soon as he heard my well-known
‘ voice, he raised his head from the ground,
‘ on which he lay, loaded with chains;
‘ and looking eagerly at me, “ Oh, my
“ friend,” said he, “ have my misfortunes
“ overwhelmed you also? Is your inno-
“ cence ruined, merely for having known
“ such a wretch as me? And yet, what is
“ my guilt? What have I done, to draw
“ this ruin upon me?”

‘ His fears had taken such possession of
‘ his heart, that it was difficult to unde-
‘ ceive him, as to the cause of my coming;
‘ difficult to persuade him that there was
‘ any prospect of his being restored to his
‘ liberty.

‘ At length, when he saw his chains
‘ taken off, and the doors of the prison
‘ opened to him, a new anxiety seized his
‘ soul; “ But will they restore me my
“ effects also?” said he, stopping short at
‘ the door of the prison, and fixing his eyes
‘ earnestly upon me: “ if not, of what
“ advantage is liberty? I had better die
“ here, than be obliged to beg my bread
“ among strangers. My misery will be
“ shorter, at the least.”

‘ I could

‘ I could scarcely suppress his emotions sufficiently for him to appear before the arbiters of his fate. I soothed! I comforted! I encouraged him to hope the best; till I in some measure recalled his reason, and made him present to himself; for I was not permitted to unfold to him the immediate occasion of his release.

‘ When at length I introduced him to them, he answered all their questions with precision; and undertook to execute their commission without hesitation, on condition of having his property restored to him, at his return with success.

‘ The nature of this commission, and the readiness with which he embraced it, struck me with such horror, that I resolved directly to separate myself both from him and his employers. But that very readiness defeated my design. It made them suspect that he wanted only to get out of their power, and therefore they insisted that I should remain as an hostage for his fidelity.

‘ It was impossible for me to avoid agreeing to this condition, without exposing him, and probably myself also to destruction; as they would naturally have concluded, that we had concerted

‘ a scheme

‘ a scheme to deceive them. I assented
‘ therefore, with an appearance of readi-
‘ ness, to that which I did not dare to
‘ refuse; and purchased my fellow-tr-
‘ veller’s liberty at the price of my own,
‘ at least for some time.

‘ The commission entrusted to him was
‘ to buy up all the produce of the year
‘ from the possessors, in order to sell it
‘ back to them at an higher price, when
‘ their necessities should become so pressing
‘ as to oblige them to give whatever should
‘ be required for it: the chief having an
‘ assured persuasion, that they had buried
‘ immense treasures in the earth, to evade
‘ the exactions of himself and his associates.

‘ It may seem improbable to you, as it
‘ did at the time to me, that any people
‘ should be so infatuated, as to put them-
‘ selves thus into the power of their known
‘ oppressors, for their very subsistence; but
‘ there is nothing so absurd, which the
‘ force of avarice cannot effect.

‘ The merchant, on my objecting this
‘ difficulty, treated it with contempt.
“ Give them,” said he, “ this day, one
“ penny more than the current price, and
“ they will accept it greedily, without
“ ever considering what may be the con-
“ sequence

“ sequence to-morrow. Present gain is all
“ which is now looked to in the world.
“ Beside, am I not armed with power to
“ compel them, should they unexpectedly
“ have the imprudence to refuse complying
“ with my proposals? They are in a snare,
“ out of which they can no way escape.”

‘ Nor did he pay greater respect to the
‘ disapprobation which I could not forbear
‘ expressing, at the readiness with which
‘ he undertook such horrid work.’

“ Your virtue, my friend,” said he,
“ is too refined ever to be carried into
“ practice, when placed in the scale against
“ the most powerful principles of human
“ nature. I would not willingly commit
“ injustice, nor lead any man to ruin; but
“ when either he or I must be ruined,
“ the trial is too severe; and nature will
“ preponderate, in spite of all the dreams
“ of speculation.”

‘ The scenes of which I was a melancholy witness, while the merchant was
‘ engaged in the execution of his commission, were too horrid for description.
‘ I shall only say, that every act of injustice
‘ and oppression, which avarice and cruelty
‘ could suggest to lawless power, was
‘ practised openly, and with such insolence
‘ that

‘ that the unhappy sufferers did not even
‘ dare to lighten their grief, by a plaintive
‘ sigh.

SECTION VII.

‘ THE return of the merchant released
‘ me, at length, from the sight of such
‘ misery, from the society of men, who
‘ were a disgrace to the human name.

‘ He had executed their commission,
‘ with unexpected success; and, as I
‘ thought, much more faithfully, than
‘ they performed their promise of reward-
‘ ing him for it.

‘ Every time he claimed the restitution
‘ of his merchandize, some new difficulty
‘ was started, some new delay made, under
‘ pretences the most frivolous, and shame-
‘ less; till growing apprehensive that they
‘ might compleat their injustice by taking
‘ away his life to free themselves from his
‘ importunity, he reduced his demand to
‘ the means of support in his return to
‘ his native country; their condescending
‘ to grant which, after much entreaty, they
‘ affected to consider, as an act of the
‘ greatest generosity, and favour.

‘ When

When he was ready to depart, he affectionately pressed me to accompany him. "Do not be discouraged, my friend," said he, "at the unfortunate issue of our journey hither. Matters are not so bad, as they may appear to be. I knew my employers too well, to trust entirely to their justice. An agent understands but little of his business, who cannot make it pay itself."

' Had I not before covenanted with my own heart to separate myself from him, the very argument on which he rested his solicitation, would have determined me to decline it. I wished him an happy journey, saying that my fate led me another way.

' I was too well acquainted with the power of habit over the human heart, to be surprized at this instance of the merchant's measuring justice by the rule of his own interest. It was but consistency of character. Not that I can say, I was displeased with the consequence, how much soever I disapproved of the motive of his conduct. His employers, and he, had been guilty of equal breaches of trust; and I therefore adored

' that

• that Power which thus made one act of
• injustice punish another.

• The condition, upon which I had con-
• sented to stay among these people, being
• thus fulfilled, I resolved to take the first
• opportunity of departing, without giving
• them any notice of my design; being
• taught by their treatment of the mer-
• chant, what confidence was to be placed
• in their promises, and apprehensive that
• they might think me too deeply ac-
• quainted with the mysteries of their
• iniquity to dismiss me.

• While I waited for such an opportu-
• nity, the success of the merchant's com-
• mission appeared in effects, not to be re-
• collected without horror.

• The natives, as he had predicted,
• either from avarice, or compulsion, had
• sold him all the produce of the land,
• which his employers no sooner got into
• their possession, than they raised the
• prices to such an height, that the
• wretches, after having expended every
• resource to purchase indispensible sup-
• port, were reduced to all the dreadful
• extremities of famine; while the authors
• of their ruin looked on with unconcern;
• nor would relax their extortion to save
• the

‘the very name of the people from being
‘blotted out from among the inhabitants
‘of the earth.

‘Virgins offered themselves to violation
‘in the streets, for a mouthful of food.
‘The son sold his father into slavery. The
‘mother devoured the infant which sucked
‘her breast. The living were not able to
‘bury the dead.

‘Amid all these horrors my soul had a
‘peculiar consolation for some time. The
‘jewels, which I had retained by the ad-
‘vice of Myrza, now served the beneficent
‘purpose for which he had advised me to
‘reserve them. I gave them to my friend,
‘the Bramin, who disposed of them, and
‘applied the price to the relief of the ge-
‘neral distress.

‘But alas! he proceeded not with suf-
‘ficient secrecy. He was discovered by
‘the inhuman tyrants. He was seized.
‘He was put to torture, to discover if he
‘had any more, and from whom he had
‘received them. He preserved his faith
‘to me; and died under the torture,
‘without making any discovery.

‘Unfortunate was it for him, that I
‘knew not of his sufferings, till they were
‘at

‘at an end. My life should not have
‘been saved at the price of his.

‘Such scenes are difficult to be believed.
‘The pride of conscious virtue is unwilling
‘to admit even a possibility of the human
‘nature’s sinking so low. But when it is
‘considered by whom these crimes were
‘perpetrated, it will be owned, that they
‘were no more than might have been
‘foreseen.

‘The weight of power is too great to be
‘sustained, under the most advantageous
‘circumstances. It too often intoxicates
‘the best head; and warps the best heart.
‘What then must its effects be in the
‘opposite extream? How could it ratio-
‘nally be expected, that men raised to ab-
‘solute power, from the lowest state of
‘servility, and from the lowest poverty,
‘should be able to resist the temptation of
‘abusing that power to acquire wealth;
‘when such abuse was, in a manner,
‘justified by practice, and encouraged by
‘impunity?

SECTION VIII.

‘AS I had been detained by these
‘events, beyond the time of my pro-
‘mised

‘ mised return to my father, I felt the
‘ anxiety of his love for my safety ; and
‘ therefore, for the greater expedition,
‘ embarked secretly in a ship, which was
‘ intended to sail directly for Suez, pre-
‘ ferring the performance of so dear a
‘ duty to any pleasure or advantage, which
‘ I could promise to myself, in the further
‘ pursuit of my travels.

‘ Heaven seemed at first to smile upon
‘ our way. We sailed with a favourable
‘ wind, till we entered the straits of *Dira*,
‘ when a violent storm arose, which, in
‘ despite of all the efforts of our mariners,
‘ who struggled with it for several days,
‘ at length drove our ship upon some rocks,
‘ where she was instantly torn to pieces.

‘ It is impossible to describe what I felt
‘ in that dreadful moment. The darkness
‘ of midnight was condensed tenfold by
‘ the fury of the storm. All was horror
‘ and dismay.

‘ Though the most resolute had lost
‘ every hope of escaping, we all, in the
‘ instinctive impulse of self-preservation,
‘ laid hold on such pieces of the wreck,
‘ as chance threw in our way, and cling-
‘ ing to them, were driven about at the
‘ mercy of the winds and waves, in which

many perished by a milder death, than awaited most of those who gained the land.

‘ It was my fate to be thrown upon the shore, without any appearance of life; a situation, to which, as I afterwards found, I owed my safety.

‘ The day had just begun to dawn, when I recovered my senses, the first efforts of which served only to present me with scenes still more horrible than that from which I had escaped. I found myself entirely naked, at some little distance from the sea, whither, I suppose, I must have been dragged for the better convenience of stripping off my cloaths.

‘ But this treatment, however cruel in itself, was kindness in comparison, of what I saw inflicted on my unhappy companions, as many of whom as reached the shore alive, were instantly slaughtered, and then stripped by the natives, who instead of relieving a state of distress, which should have moved every humane passion, looked upon them, and their property, as lawful prey.

‘ Shocked as my soul was, at such barbarity, nature directed my first thoughts

‘ to my own safety. I lay, as motionless
 ‘ as if I was really dead, till I saw the
 ‘ savages depart, laden with the spoils of
 ‘ the wretches, whom they had slaughter-
 ‘ ed; when raising myself, as well as
 ‘ weakness and the pain of many bruises
 ‘ would permit, I crept to the sea side to
 ‘ try if I could happily administer relief
 ‘ to any who might have escaped in the
 ‘ same manner with myself, and find some
 ‘ cloaths to cover me, which had been
 ‘ over-looked by the ravagers in the hurry
 ‘ of their rapacity.

‘ But I was disappointed at the first in
 ‘ either hope. They were too well ex-
 ‘ perienced in the work to leave it un-
 ‘ finished; and I was just going to depart,
 ‘ though I knew not whither, when casting
 ‘ my eyes, once more, wishfully to the
 ‘ sea, I thought I perceived something
 ‘ floating toward the shore.

‘ The storm having by this time nearly
 ‘ spent its force, I ventured into the water,
 ‘ to see what the object before me might
 ‘ be; when I found one of my fellow-
 ‘ passengers, with whom I had contracted
 ‘ a particular intimacy, with his arms
 ‘ clasped round a coffer, to which he was
 ‘ tied. I instantly raised his head above

‘ the water, and perceiving some signs of
 ‘ life, exerted all my strength, to draw
 ‘ him upon the dry land, where my care
 ‘ soon restored him to his senses.

‘ The moment he opened his eyes, and
 ‘ saw me busied about him, his situation
 ‘ suggested itself to him in the worst light,
 ‘ my being naked preventing his knowing
 ‘ me; and making him imagine I was one
 ‘ of the spoilers, with whose nefarious
 ‘ practices he was too well acquainted.
 ‘ Lifting his hands therefore, in a sup-
 ‘ plicant manner, “O! spare my life,”
 ‘ said he, “spare the life of an old man,
 ‘ who will never disturb your possession
 ‘ of what you have acquired.”

‘ What!’ I returned: ‘ Do you not
 ‘ know me? Can Hassan be taken for a
 ‘ spoiler by his friend?

‘ He started, on hearing my voice, and
 ‘ looking eagerly at me, “Is it possible?”
 ‘ said he, “Can I be so happy? But where
 ‘ is the coffer to which I was bound? If
 ‘ that is lost my life is of little value to
 ‘ me.”

‘ I then shewed him the coffer, where
 ‘ it still lay in the water, upon which he
 ‘ arose with a vigour not to have been
 ‘ expected from his situation, and running
 ‘ toward

“ toward it, “ Let us then secure it instantly,” said he, “ before the spoilers come, or they will not only rob us of all it contains, but murder us also, to secure the spoil.”

‘ As soon as he had drawn it to the land he opened the locks, and taking out a casket, put it into his bosom, and was preparing to depart, without seeming even to think of any thing else.

‘ Such an insensibility to the situation I was in, affected me. “ How!” said I, “ and will my friend desert me, thus naked and alone?”

‘ He started; and pausing for a moment, as if just awakened from a dream, “ Desert you!” he returned; “ no, never will I desert my preserver. But what can we do? The spoilers will come upon us the moment they discover that our ship has been wrecked. The vulture is not more quick to find his prey, nor the tyger more cruel, than the inhabitants of the sea-coasts to destroy those whom the more merciful waves throw into their power.”

‘ I then acquainted him, that they had been already there, shewing him the slaughtered bodies on the shore, to which

‘ I added my own condition, as proofs of
‘ their bloody rapacity.

‘ His thoughts were so intently fixed
‘ upon himself, that he seemed to have
‘ no feeling for the misfortunes of any
‘ other. “ Thank! heaven,” said he,
‘ embracing the casket, “ that we have
“ escaped though; and that my jewels
“ are safe! But we must not remain here!
“ As soon as they have left their spoil at
“ home, they will return, to try if they
“ can glean up any more. I will share
“ my garments with thee for the present.
“ We shall soon be able to procure every
“ thing we want.”

‘ He was proceeding to strip himself,
‘ when the occasion was unhappily re-
‘ moved. The sea threw up, near to the
‘ place where we stood, the body of one
‘ of our companions, whom finding to be
‘ dead, I yielded to the horrid necessity of
‘ taking his cloaths to cover myself.

SECT ION IX.

‘ WE had not advanced far into the
‘ country before we discovered a cottage,
‘ the poor appearance of which, shewed
‘ the poverty of its inhabitants.

‘ On our approaching the door, which stood open to give light to the family, whom we found seated around a little fire, at a meal of simple vegetables, the master invited us in the most hospitable manner to partake of his humble fare.

‘ Though I knew him, at the first cast of my eye, to be one of those who had been most active in murdering and spoiling my unhappy companions, my astonishment was not greater at the present contrast in his conduct, than to hear him address us in the Byrsan language.

‘ Gracious heaven! I exclaimed, ‘ where am I? Is it possible that this is the country of the Byrsans? That such barbarous crimes should be committed in defiance of the most beneficent laws?

‘ The cottager, who knew not the cause of my exclamation, appeared to be surprised; nor made me any answer, till I repeated my question, when he informed me, that I was in my native country.

‘ But my companion, who understood my meaning, having often heard me boast of the laws of Byrsa, as superior to those of all other nations, would not miss such an occasion of reproofing my vain partiality. “ Why should not such crimes,”

“ said he, “ be committed in this country,
“ as soon as in any other? It is not the
“ laws, but the execution of them, which
“ hath an effect upon the manners of a
“ people. The best laws, if badly admi-
“ nistered, only encourage the crimes
“ which they were designed to prevent.”

‘ The cottager, having directed us the
‘ way to Byrsa, returned to the sea-coast,
‘ to seek for more spoil, in contempt of
‘ every argument I could use to dissuade
‘ him; while we proceeded toward the
‘ house of my father, my heart panting
‘ with filial love and joy, at the thought
‘ of being so near him.

‘ The contradiction between the conduct
‘ of the cottager, when at home, and on
‘ the shore, was so striking, that I could
‘ not forbear expressing my surprize to my
‘ companion, who accounted for it, in a
‘ manner most disgraceful to the polity of
‘ any civilized people.

“ The nature of man,” said he, “ is in
“ itself benevolent. Cruelty is ever the
“ consequence of error in opinion or of
“ bad example. In his cottage you saw
“ this man in his natural character. His
“ conduct, on the shore, proceeded from
“ a notion derived from the laws of times
“ of

“ of ignorance and barbarity, that the
“ plunderers could not be compelled to
“ make restitution of their spoil, if no
“ man belonging to a ship, which was
“ wrecked, remained alive to claim it.

“ If then the legislature of Byrsa really
“ merited the praise, which you have so
“ lavishly bestowed upon it, would not
“ proper means have been taken to eradi-
“ cate such a notion, and prevent its hor-
“ rid consequences, by confiscating to the
“ state every wreck, where all the people
“ perished; and on the other hand, allow-
“ ing a part thereof to the inhabitants of
“ the coast, in proportion to the number
“ of lives saved by them; instead of the
“ present absurd method of punishment
“ for plundering, which they evade by
“ murdering all who might prove their
“ guilt?”

“ Though this objection was not to be
“ answered, I could not suppress the ex-
“ ultation of my heart, at the appearance
“ of happiness, which shone in every place
“ we passed through, as we advanced
“ toward the capital; nor forbear point-
“ ing it out to my companion, as the best
“ vindication of our laws.

“ But he viewed matters in another light. “ Moderate your pride,” said he, “ till you see whether it is well founded. “ When I view the face of the country, I “ think myself in paradise. But when I “ consider the inhabitants, my opinion is “ much less favourable. The extremities “ of the land are uncultivated for want of “ people, who crowd to the metropolis, “ where their labour is wasted in works of “ vanity. The whole nation is drowned “ in luxury. They are poor in the midst “ of plenty. They have much, but they “ want still more. Their powers both of “ mind and body are weakened by excess, “ their principles debauched by prosperity. “ In a word, their happiness hath over- “ flowed its bounds; and if this calm con- “ tinues much longer, Byrsa will over-set, “ in the first storm, which shall fall with “ any force upon it.”

SECTION X.

‘ MY meeting with my father is not to
‘ be described. He had been for some
‘ time sinking under the infirmities of
‘ age; and seemed to have struggled to
‘ preserve

‘ preserve life only till he could resign it in
‘ my bosom.

‘ The moment he was informed of my
‘ arrival, he called me eagerly to him ;
‘ and throwing his arms around my neck,
‘ as I kneeled by the side of his bed, “ It
“ is enough ! ” said he, “ Gracious heaven,
“ it is enough. I embrace him once more ;
“ and now I die content.” —

‘ Then pausing a few moments to re-
‘ cover his spirits, unequal to such an
‘ excess of joy, “ O ! bless my son ! ” he
‘ continued ; “ Enable him to save his ” —
‘ he would have added, country ; but the
‘ word died unfinished on his tongue,
‘ (heaven not permitting him to prefer a
‘ prayer which must be ineffectual) and he
‘ expired without a groan in my arms.

‘ Having performed the last duties to
‘ his honoured remains, I determined to
‘ devote the residue of my days to the
‘ cultivation of my mind in retirement,
‘ every thing I saw around me giving me
‘ a disgust to the world.

‘ I had found such pleasure in the con-
‘ versation of my late fellow-sufferer in the
‘ shipwreck, whose benevolence of heart,
‘ and judicious acquaintance with the ways
‘ of man opened themselves upon me,
‘ more

‘ more and more, every hour, that I would
‘ have persuaded him to remain with me.

‘ But all my persuasions were ineffectual.
‘ He had fixed his mind upon returning to
‘ his native city of Cairo, and there ending
‘ his days among his family. We parted
‘ with the sincerest sentiments of mutual
‘ esteem.

SECTION XI.

‘ I have informed you of the claim
‘ which the Byrsans made to the neigh-
‘ bbouring country of the Coptes. It had
‘ pleased heaven to lead me home, just as
‘ their army was preparing to march, to
‘ inforce that claim.

‘ Though I had determined upon a
‘ retired life, the principles in which I
‘ had been educated by my father, making
‘ me disapprove a measure so contrary to
‘ justice, I thought it my first duty to en-
‘ deavour to prevent it, before I would
‘ attend to any thing which related solely
‘ to myself.

‘ I resolved therefore to demand an
‘ audience of the king, to whom my
‘ rank in the state gave me a right of
‘ speaking my sentiments on public affairs;

‘ and

‘ and lay before him the reasons of my
‘ dissenting from the general voice on so
‘ important an occasion ; not doubting but
‘ I should be able to open his eyes to the
‘ evils which must necessarily result from it.

‘ The war appeared to me so flagrantly
‘ unjust, that I imagined there must be
‘ some secret reasons for it, to which my
‘ absence had made me a stranger, or it
‘ could never have been resolved on.
‘ Before, therefore, I would presume to
‘ oppose it, I thought it necessary to en-
‘ quire more particularly into the matter,
‘ as I knew the danger of judging on a
‘ partial view.

‘ For this purpose I went directly to a
‘ person, whose having held several of the
‘ first offices in the state, I concluded must
‘ enable him to give me the information I
‘ wanted ; and which an alliance between
‘ our houses gave me a right to require.

‘ On entering his habitation, I was sur-
‘ prized to find every thing wear a gloomy
‘ aspect. The very looks of the servants
‘ spoke an unhappy master. He received
‘ me with an air of dignity and respect,
‘ but clouded with a reserve, which made
‘ it disagreeable, and seemed desirous to
‘ confine his conversation to general ques-
‘ tions,

‘tions, relating to the countries which I
‘had seen in my travels.

‘This, however, gave me an easy opportunity of leading him to the subject of
‘the approaching war, without expressly
‘declaring the purpose of my coming,
‘which I apprehended might have made
‘him still more reserved: I therefore, as
‘occasionally, desired to know his opinion
‘of it, as a direction to mine, which,
‘probably for want of proper information,
‘I owned to be against it.

‘At the first mention of the affair, I
‘saw his eyes sparkle with indignation,
‘which arose as I proceeded, till it en-
‘tirely dissipated the gloom which hung
‘upon his brow, and broke through his
‘reserve.

“I am happy,” said he, with a look of
“the warmest complacency, “to find your
“sentiments concur with mine, on this
“important occasion; for, if you are not
“satisfied with the apparent, much less
“will you be, with the real motives of
“this war. The former have at least
“something like a colour, however false,
“of justice; because it was necessary to
“deceive the people, who can never be
“led into any thing which they know to
“be

“ be unjust, how easily soever they may
“ be deceived; but the latter are a mystery
“ of the grossest iniquity, in every sense.”

“ Good heaven!” I returned, ‘ whence
‘ can this proceed? The youth of our
‘ sovereign opened with the fairest hopes.’

“ Nor hath he ever fallen from those
“ hopes!” interrupted he, eagerly. “ One
“ vice hath never stained his private life,
“ one act of injustice warped his public
“ conduct. Yet still, a character, less
“ pure, might have proved more advan-
“ tageous to his people. To form a pro-
“ per judgment of a man, his station must
“ be considered. The virtues most sub-
“ lime in a subject are often but amiable
“ weaknesses in a sovereign.

“ I see that your absence hath made
“ you a stranger to the secret springs
“ upon which our government moves at
“ this time. The balance between its
“ parts, and their mutual check upon each
“ other, which gave it the pre-eminence
“ over all the other governments upon
“ earth, exist now only in name.

“ The superior council, by dissipating
“ the property appointed to support its
“ independance, is fallen absolutely under
“ the influence of the crown; as the in-
“ ferior

“ ferior daily betrays to it the trust committed to them, to acquire matter for a like dissipation ; the gratification of luxury being the only object attended to by every class of mankind.

“ You may naturally conclude that the power of the sovereign must become absolute by this prostration of the fences instituted to restrain it. But the contrary is the fact. All the power, which he seems to obtain in this manner, is wasted in the very means made use of to obtain it ; and himself kept in a kind of slavery to the instruments of this corruption, in which they have so entangled the whole system of government, that it now appears to be one of its first principles ; and often compels him to give the sanction of his name and authority to measures the most contrary to his own sentiments ; of which there cannot be a stronger instance than this war, which is literally forced upon him, by his servants, though as contrary to their inclinations, as to his ; their ambition and abilities being equally limited to the dark works of seduction.

“ But the people have of late begun to look so narrowly into their conduct, and

“ to

“ to shew such symptoms of discontent,
“ that apprehensive of the consequence,
“ they adopted this expedient to turn the
“ attention of the public from themselves,
“ blazoning the war, with such hopes of
“ private advantage, as have made the
“ injustice of it easily pass unnoticed.

“ Nor is the power of this hope to be
“ wondered at. We have lived so far
“ before-hand, that it is terrifying to look
“ forward. Not only private fortunes are
“ wasted by the luxury, which is expressly
“ encouraged by the court for that pur-
“ pose, that people may become dependant
“ on its favour for support; but the very
“ resources of the state are anticipated to
“ such a depth, in order to support this
“ system of corruption, that far from being
“ able to stand any violent shock, we must
“ of necessity sink by our own weight, if
“ we are not saved by some means impos-
“ sible for human reason to provide.

“ The whole system of men’s souls, if
“ I may use the expression, must be
“ changed; and another adopted, in every
“ respect opposite to it: An effect, which
“ can be produced only by some heavy
“ misfortune (if such can be surmounted!)
“ which

“ which shall bring the government back
“ to its first principles.

“ For my own part, I am so sick of a
“ world, in which I see nothing but folly
“ and vice, that if there is not a sudden
“ change, which I have no reason to ex-
“ pect, I will anticipate the stroke of fate,
“ and quiet it.”

“ The horrid resolution, with which he
“ concluded this melancholy representa-
“ tion, aggravated the pain it gave me,
“ ten thousand fold. ‘ O! beware,’ I ex-
“ claimed, ‘ of indulging so dangerous a
“ thought; of tempting the wrath of hea-
“ ven, by diffidence in its goodness, and
“ power! A crime, which reason and re-
“ ligion equally forbid; and madness only
“ can excuse.’

“ Reason,” he answered, “ prompts me
“ to fly from evil.” —

“ But not to a greater,” I interrupted
“ eagerly: ‘ Not to evils, from which
“ there is no flying, no hoping for relief.’

“ Of those evils,” he replied with a
“ contemptuous smile, “ I know nothing.
“ The phantoms, with which superstitious
“ ignorance was so long terrified, are at
“ length seen through. Nature seeks hap-
“ piness; and if I can not find it, in this
“ life,

“ life, I must follow the pursuit into
“ another; if such there is! It is better
“ not to be, than be unhappy!”

‘ I attempted not to argue with him
‘ farther, as I could plainly see, by the
‘ manner in which he expressed himself,
‘ that contradiction would only confirm
‘ him more strongly in his opinion, and
‘ perhaps stimulate his vanity to hasten the
‘ execution of it.

SECTION XII.

‘ I was diverted from the painful re-
‘ flections, which such a scene naturally
‘ suggested, at my return, by the entrance of
‘ a person, who had been one of the most
‘ intimate acquaintance of my early youth.

‘ As I had been informed, that he had
‘ wasted his fortune, in every mode of
‘ idle dissipation and expence, I was most
‘ agreeably surprised at his appearance,
‘ every thing in which spoke affluence, and
‘ a mind at ease. He saluted me with the
‘ warmest professions of regard; and we
‘ instantly continued our former intimacy,
‘ as if it had never been interrupted.

‘ After some reciprocal inquiries of per-
‘ sonal affection, I informed him of the
‘ conversation,

“ conversation, which had passed, at the
“ visit, from which I was just returned.

“ He paused a few moments, as struck
“ by what I had said, then with a look not
“ well assured, “ I shall not pretend,” he
“ answered, “ to vindicate in all things,
“ either the measures of the government,
“ or the manners of the age! But the
“ motives of this person’s disapprobation,
“ greatly weaken the force of it. He
“ speaks from the rage of disappointment,
“ not from principle.

“ That political corruption, against
“ which he inveighs with such acrimony,
“ did he himself carry to such lengths,
“ when in power, that it was too gross to
“ be supported; and occasioned his de-
“ posal; nor is there a moral vice, which
“ hath not stained his character; but as
“ some of these vices have been retorted
“ against himself, and he is no longer
“ permitted to practise that corruption,
“ he now declaims against it, in this man-
“ ner. But you must not trust too im-
“ plicitly to his representations. Because
“ the world does not go, as he likes, he
“ modestly says it is going to ruin.”

“ The human heart is so fond of happi-
“ ness, that we give easy credit to what

“ we

‘ we wish. I looked upon the gloomy picture, which had been drawn to me, ‘ to have proceeded merely from the clouds, which over-cast the painter’s mind; and did not doubt but my friend ‘ would set every thing in a very different light.

‘ I therefore desired him to acquaint ‘ me, if there were any reasons for the ‘ approaching war, beside those publicly ‘ given, which I scrupled not to say ‘ were so flagrantly unjust, that I had ‘ resolved to exert my utmost endeavours ‘ to prevent it.

“ My dear friend,” he answered, staring ‘ at me with surprize, “ what you say, “ may possibly be very true; but these “ are matters, about which I never give “ myself any trouble.”

‘ How! I returned, astonished at what ‘ he said, ‘ not give yourself trouble about ‘ matters of the greatest importance to a ‘ state, in which you hold so high a rank? ‘ In the government of which you have ‘ ever undertaken a part, not to be exe- ‘ cuted without trouble? You are not; ‘ you can not be serious! But this is a sub- ‘ ject, most improper for pleasantry!”

“ I speak my sentiments, I assure you! ‘ he

“ he replied, “ I never did, nor ever will
“ give myself trouble about any thing.
“ If I would have taken trouble, with
“ matters of this nature, I might proba-
“ bly have conducted them myself. My
“ purpose is to enjoy the pleasures of life,
“ while I can, without troubling myself
“ about consequences, which all my trou-
“ ble may not be able to prevent.”

“ But!” said I, interrupting him shortly :
“ If you were determined not to take
“ trouble, why did you take an office,
“ which required it ? You know my plain-
“ ness ! Is it consistent with a just sense
“ of honour, or even with common ho-
“ nesty to take the wages, without doing
“ the work ? ”

“ You were always an enthusiast ! ” he
“ answered with a forced smile ; “ and I
“ find you will ever remain one. I was
“ in hope, that seeing the world would
“ have opened your mind ; and shewn you
“ the absurdity of such antiquated notions.
“ I took the office, because I had occasion
“ for the emoluments of it ; as the visier
“ gave it, to attach me to his interest :
“ And on the same terms, is every office
“ given and accepted.

“ If

“ If you imagine, that any one under
“ the visier presumes, in virtue of his
“ office, to do any thing, you are utterly
“ mistaken. It is he, who virtually does
“ every thing; and all the other officers
“ of the state are no better than cyphers
“ following him, to add to his conse-
“ quence.

SECTION XIII.

“ BUT let us wave a subject, on which
“ we only waste our time. I have come to
“ request a favour from you, which I pro-
“ mise myself you will not refuse me.

“ You must know, that I am in one of
“ the most whimsical situations, possible to
“ be conceived. You remember our old
“ friend Mago. The intimacy, which
“ begun with our lives, hath continued
“ to this day; though it was lately endan-
“ gered by one of the oddest accidents,
“ which ever happened. Can you think
“ it possible, that he and I should fall in
“ love with each other’s wife, and succeed
“ in our loves too?

“ For some time, matters went on, as
“ smoothly as we could wish, neither of
“ us suspecting the other, till growing too
“ secure,

“ secure, he happened one day to surprize
“ his wife and me in a situation of more
“ familiarity, than common forms allow.
“ You know his hasty temper. He drew
“ his sabre instantly, and advanced to
“ attack me.

“ I am not a coward: but I know not
“ how it happened. A qualm of con-
“ science I suppose came upon me; and
“ I did not care to run the hazard of
“ losing my own life in so foolish a cause,
“ or adding his death to the injury I had
“ already done him.

“ I therefore demanded a parley, sword
“ in hand; and after some preliminaries,
“ in making which I believe I looked
“ silly enough, I frankly told him, that
“ in the way he sought satisfaction, the
“ odds were against him; but that if he
“ would take my advice, I could direct
“ him to a better, which would bring us
“ more upon a level; this was, to return
“ me in kind the good office I had done
“ him; and then there would be nothing
“ to complain of, on either side.

“ The look he gave me, as I said this,
“ is not to be described. He fixed his
“ eyes upon me, for a few moments, to
“ see if I was serious, then bursting into
“ a loud

“a loud laugh, ‘Give me your hand,
“brother,’ said he: ‘I applaud your pru-
“dence; and to tell you a secret, have
“not waited for your permission, to do
“what you propose. So let us e’en shake
“hands, and make the best of our bar-
“gains.’

“From that day, all was harmony and
“good-fellowship between us; to make
“which, as we thought, the stronger, and
“as the affair had some way taken wind,
“we repudiated our own wives respec-
“tively, and wedded those of each other,
“to satisfy their delicacy, and repair their
“reputations.”—

‘My indignation, which had been rising
‘still higher, at every word he spoke,
‘could be restrained no longer. How,’ I
‘exclaimed, ‘wed a woman of whose
‘dishonour you were yourself a witness!
‘What! though you were an accomplice
‘in her guilt, your participation lessened
‘not the crime in her; nor can you expect
‘that she will be more faithful to you, than
‘she was to your friend. In the first step
‘is all the difficulty. A woman, who hath
‘once surmounted that, seldom feels any
‘reluctance to proceed in the same way.
‘Beside your own honour—

“ You are too squeamish! quite too
“ squeamish!” he interrupted, not desiring
“ to hear more. “ The world is grown
“ wiser, than to view these matters in so
“ serious a light, as formerly. How can
“ a man’s honour be injured by the levity
“ of a woman? That is another of those
“ antiquated absurdities, which are now
“ only laughed at; and you will soon be
“ ashamed of.

“ As to her future conduct, that is her
“ own affair. If she should be caught
“ tripping, she knows the consequence.
“ What is past is nothing. Custom has
“ sanctified these matters.

“ But to return to my purpose. The
“ mischief now is, that this second mar-
“ riage has spoiled all. Whether it is the
“ thought of restraint, or that there is
“ something disgusting in the name of
“ matrimony, I know not; but so it hath
“ happened, that we were all soon sur-
“ feited of our exchange; and wished for
“ our own back again.

“ Now as this is a new case, which will
“ create a good deal of impertinent noise,
“ and be attended with much trouble and
“ delay, what I propose is to have a law
“ made, which shall authorize an exchange
“ of

“ of wives, as often as all the parties are
“ willing; and then the numbers, who, I
“ know, will take advantage of it, will
“ keep us in countenance.

“ The favour, therefore, which I have
“ to request of you, is to introduce the
“ matter for me to the legislature, as a
“ thought of your own, which occurred
“ to you, in your travels, on observing
“ the evils, which universally attend in-
“ dissoluble marriages.

“ The sobriety of your character will
“ give weight to the scheme; and obviate
“ the personal allusions which would be
“ made, if I were to take the lead in it
“ myself. You may also, to make the
“ thing still more popular, add, that no
“ single man shall suffer for having an
“ amour with a married woman, provided
“ he will take her off her husband’s hands,
“ and marry her himself, which will
“ endear you to all ranks of people, much
“ more than opposing the war; such mar-
“ riages, though allowed at present, and
“ sometimes practised, being attended with
“ so much trouble and expence, that very
“ few can afford them, whereby many a
“ wife is obliged to baulk her inclinations,
“ and many an husband to wear his horns

“in silence, for want of such a law to re-
“lieve them.”

SECTION XIV.

‘ I know not whether my indignation or
‘ contempt was most moved by this propo-
‘ sal. ‘ Such a law, as you mention,’ I
‘ replied, ‘ seems to be the only thing
‘ wanted to compleat that dissoluteness,
‘ which marks the character of the Byrsan
‘ nation, with deeper disgrace, than ever
‘ dishonoured any other people.

‘ A legislature, which had a just sense
‘ of honour, instead of authorising, would
‘ use every possible means to prevent such
‘ infamous marriages. Marriages, which
‘ defeat the very intention of marriage, by
‘ providing a reward for that breach of
‘ faith, which it was instituted to prevent.

‘ The law, too evidently necessary is to
‘ brand public vice, with public infamy;
‘ and prevent a repetition of the breach of
‘ matrimonial fidelity, by prohibiting the
‘ offender from ever marrying again.
‘ Indeed, so sacred should the honour of
‘ the female sex be held, that a woman,
‘ who could so far forget her own dignity,
‘ as to suffer seduction even in a state of
‘ freedom,

‘ freedom, and without the additional guilt
‘ of conjugal infidelity, should not be ad-
‘ mitted to marry even with her seducer.
‘ As the crime is indelible, the punishment
‘ should be inevitable.

‘ Such was the sense of that people,
‘ whose superior virtue over-turned the
‘ dissolute city of Carthage, and forced
‘ our ancestors to fly from their native
‘ country; a fate, which evidently threa-
‘ tens their degenerate offspring, and this
‘ more dissolute city of Byrsa.’—Saying
‘ which I turned away in disdain, waving
‘ my hand to him to depart.

‘ The horror, with which I was struck
‘ by the conversation of these men, is not
‘ to be expressed. I held it as impossible,
‘ that a state, in which the only firm bond
‘ of human connection, moral virtue, is
‘ universally broken, should not separate,
‘ and fall to ruin; as I know it to be, for
‘ any other than religious principles to sup-
‘ port man, through the evils inevitably
‘ incident to his nature; a truth, confirmed
‘ by too many melancholy instances among
‘ the Byrsans, who ignorant of the illimita-
‘ ble extent of divine mercy, or not daring
‘ to look up to it, sunk into despair, on
‘ the lightest disappointment; and rashly

‘threw away lives, which a better sense
‘might have rendered happy to them-
‘selves, and useful to their country.

‘Discouraged as I was by these reflec-
‘tions, I knew it to be my duty not to
‘despair of the public welfare, or relax
‘my endeavours to promote it; and there-
‘fore resolved to go without farther delay
‘to the king, and lay my sentiments of
‘the war before him.

‘As I was departing from my own
‘habitation for this purpose, I was stopped
‘by a stranger, who said, with a myste-
‘rious look, that he had an affair of im-
‘portance to impart to me.

‘On my retiring with him, into an
‘inner chamber, he told me, he was sorry
‘to trouble me, on a disagreeable occasion;
‘but that his friendship for the person
‘who had just left me, would not permit
‘his refusing to come from him, to de-
‘mand satisfaction for my treatment of
‘him, in our last conversation.

‘Such a demand struck me with the
‘strongest astonishment. I answered, that
‘his friend must certainly be mistaken, as
‘I could not charge myself with having
‘treated him, or any other man ill, in
‘my life.

‘I suppose

‘ I suppose he thought I was terrified,
‘ and therefore that he might the more
‘ safely press upon me. He replied with
‘ an haughty air, that his friend had too
‘ high a sense of honour to be satisfied
‘ with so poor an evasion, and that I must
‘ either instantly meet him, or take the
‘ consequence of my cowardice.

‘ But he overacted his part. Such a
‘ menace, instead of fear or resentment,
‘ raised only my contempt. I answered
‘ him with the coldest indifference, that
‘ I was surprized to hear honour attributed
‘ to a man, who by his own confession had
‘ forfeited every claim to it; and that if
‘ he thought himself aggrieved by my
‘ treatment of him, he must correct the
‘ conduct, which had given occasion for
‘ it; and then he need not fear meeting
‘ the like from me again.

‘ Such a répulse shewed him his error.
‘ Lowering the tone of his voice, he said,
‘ he hoped I would consider that it was a
‘ delicate point; and wished some method
‘ could be found to adjust it, without
‘ coming to extremities.’

‘ But this moderation was affected too
‘ late. I replied, that I knew no method,
‘ but that which I had propos'd of his
‘ changing

‘ changing his conduct in life, upon which
‘ I would certainly change mine to him;
‘ and not till then; and that as for the con-
‘ sequences, which he had thought proper
‘ to threaten, I gave myself no concern
‘ about them, as I had too just a respect
‘ for true honour to pay any to the shadow,
‘ which he affected to worship, or submit
‘ my own principles to public opinion, by
‘ descending to put myself on a level with a
‘ man, who had given up every thing really
‘ respectable, in the human character.

‘ This was an answer, he seemed not to
‘ have been prepared for. He paused for
‘ some minutes, as if considering what to
‘ reply; and then withdrew without even
‘ attempting to speak another word.

SECTION XV.

‘ AS soon as the agitation, naturally
‘ raised by such a scene, had subsided, I
‘ went to the king; and in the humility of
‘ loyal duty examined before him the
‘ cause, and looked forward to the conse-
‘ quences of the war; and having shewn
‘ that these were as dangerous, as that
‘ was unjust, besought him to interpose his
‘ authority to prevent it.

‘ He

‘ He heard me with attention; and
‘ even seemed struck with what I said; but
‘ without attempting to refute it, answered
‘ in general terms, that the war was
‘ already resolved upon; and the minds of
‘ the people so intent upon it, that it was
‘ impossible to resist them.

‘ Severely as I was affected by this re-
‘ pulse, it was not the only thing which
‘ gave me pain, on the occasion. No
‘ sooner was my disapprobation of the war
‘ known, than I was appointed to a prin-
‘ cipal command in the army prepared to
‘ carry it on.

‘ To a person, unacquainted with the
‘ principles, which prevailed among the
‘ Byrsans, at that time, this must appear
‘ a designed insult. But no such thing
‘ was thought of; it was intended as a
‘ mark of respect; as a gratification of
‘ the purpose of my opposition. This
‘ must be explained.

‘ There is no human institution, how-
‘ ever wise, and salutary in its natural ef-
‘ fects, which the depravity of man can not
‘ pervert to the most pernicious purposes.

‘ The great council, which Narbal had
‘ appointed to assist the sovereign, in the
‘ difficulties of government, with their
‘ advice;

‘ advice, and watch over the interests of
‘ the people, with which they, as a part,
‘ must necessarily be better acquainted
‘ than he could be, often acted directly
‘ contrary to that intention, losing all con-
‘ sequence under a spirited and politic
‘ prince; and on the other hand, when
‘ one of a different character offered op-
‘ portunity, rising upon his weakness, and
‘ usurping the power, while he had only
‘ the name of sovereignty.

‘ In the former instance, honorary dis-
‘ tinctions, and the emoluments of go-
‘ vernment always afforded a prince, who
‘ had abilities to apply them properly,
‘ the means of influencing the members of
‘ the council, and making them subser-
‘ vient to his purpose; but those, which
‘ they employed against him, may not be
‘ so obvious to you, though they were
‘ equally ready.

‘ As the council had a right to delibe-
‘ rate upon the measures of government,
‘ it was easy for a designing member to
‘ carp at such, as though necessary, and
‘ strictly just, might appear exceptionable
‘ to a superficial view; in which he was
‘ sure of being followed by the unthink-
‘ ing populace, as the tutelary assertor and
‘ guardian

‘ guardian of their rights; till they raised
‘ him to such a consequence, as enabled
‘ him to enhance the price of his acquies-
‘ cence with the will of the prince, or per-
‘ haps wrest his authority out of his hands.

‘ Nothing could be a stronger proof of
‘ the wisdom of Narbal, than that even so
‘ gross an abuse of his institution was not
‘ sufficient to counterbalance the advan-
‘ tages, arising from this council, and
‘ make the abolition of it necessary; the
‘ very means, by which this abuse was
‘ perpetrated, preventing the obvious and
‘ worst consequences of it; and preserving
‘ the great principles of the government
‘ from being lost.

‘ For in order to acquire this popularity,
‘ it was necessary to explain those princi-
‘ ples to the people, who soon saw their
‘ interest, and ability to preserve them;
‘ and though they joined in their abuse,
‘ would never have submitted to their
‘ being fundamentally overturned.

‘ On this system therefore the vizier
‘ judging of me, by all those, who had
‘ on other occasions opposed public mea-
‘ sures, concluded that the readiest way of
‘ gaining me to his interest, was to give
‘ me this command, the inconsistency of
‘ my

‘ my accepting which, with my opposition
‘ to the war, was sufficiently countenanced
‘ by the general practice.

‘ But such an example had no weight
‘ with me; and I refused his offer with
‘ indignation, till my sovereign himself
‘ condescending to request my compliance,
‘ personal respect to him, and a sense of
‘ the sacred duty of subjection, obliged
‘ me to accept it, however contrary to
‘ my inclination.’

“ How blind,” interrupted Temugin,
“ will attachment to a favourite system
“ make the best informed mind? This
“ man, who wanted not wisdom in other
“ matters, could see no imperfection, in
“ the principles of a government, which
“ teemed with the cause of its own dissolu-
“ tion, from the first hour it was instituted.
“ A state, in which the power of the
“ sovereign can be counterbalanced by that
“ of his subjects, is like a body without
“ an head, and must necessarily fall to
“ ruin.

“ I will hear the conclusion of his story
“ at some other time.

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End of the FIRST VOLUME.